

PASSING THE TORCH: A PROPOSAL FOR TRANSITION
AND SUCCESSION PLANNING AT MACEDONIA
BAPTIST CHURCH IN DAYTON, OHIO

Jarvis A. Ellis

BA, Paine College, 2010
MA, Trevecca University, 2019

Mentors

Sir Walter Mack, DMin
Herbert Miller, DMin

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ABSTRACT

PASSING THE TORCH: A PROPOSAL FOR TRANSITION AND SUCCESSION PLANNING AT MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH IN DAYTON, OHIO

by
Jarvis A. Ellis
United Theological Seminary, 2024

Mentors

Sir Walter Mack, DMin
Herbert Miller, DMin

The context of this project is the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. Macedonia does not have a process of developing and training leaders for transition and succession. If members of Macedonia are exposed to teaching series on healthy succession and leadership transition, they will be better prepared to successfully transition from leadership administration to another. The duration of this project was six weeks. To observe the embrace of subject matter, pre -and post-tests were completed along with interviews and journaling. Upon completion, project participants demonstrated better understanding for the need to prepare for leadership transition and succession at Macedonia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God be the glory for the things He has done! This three-year journey has been one of faith, perseverance, and lots of tears. I am beyond grateful for the privilege to study and matriculate through United Theological Seminary and complete this work. To my doctoral mentors, Dr. Sir Walter Mack and Dr. Herbert Miller, thank you for your leadership, guidance, and support. To all of my Mack/Miller cohort brothers and sisters, you all have been a blessing to me throughout the journey. My personal growth and ministry have been strengthened because of your contributions to my life and ministry.

To those who participated in my project, from the group of participants and my context associates, I sincerely want to thank you for taking this journey with me. To all of my professional associates who guided me and provided some much needed feedback during my doctoral journey, words cannot express how grateful I am for your necessary deposits into this project and myself.

Thank you to the membership of Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. Your prayers and words of encouragement pushed me to see this through. This has been an experience for all of us together. I pray this work will propel us forward to living out our mission of “Loving God, Loving People and Making A Difference.” To my family, I pray that I have made you all proud as you all have given me the strength to complete a lifelong academic goal of mine. To my parents, the love you gave and the model you set for me as a child prepared me for this journey. To my son, Jarvis Armard Ellis, II, you are

my biggest motivation for getting out of bed daily and giving my all to everything that my hands and name are attached to it. Jarvis, thank you for being my why! Finally, to my beautiful and loving wife, Malloree, a woman who I have been in love with since the age of seventeen. Malloree, there are not enough words to express your impact on my doctoral journey. I would have easily quit and thrown in the towel, but your support, love, and encouragement kept me going. You took on more in the house and so that I could focus on completing this journey and I share this degree with you. For every person who has ever pushed, prayed, sowed, and encouraged me in any way, thank you so much. I love you all.

DEDICATION

As I look back over my life and ministry journey thus far, it has been one of trials, twists, and transitions, but God has been faithful and consistent every step of the way. I would like to dedicate this project to the memory of my late father and hero, Harold Lee Ellis Sr., and my late childhood pastor, Bishop Joseph L. Thompson, Sr. These two pillars helped to shape, mold, and cultivate many of the gifts, talents, morals, and values that I carry with me daily. I am beyond grateful to God for allowing both men to shape me naturally and spiritually. I am beyond appreciative and grateful for their deposits into my life that has yielded fruit I never dreamed of nor imagined. I would like to close this dedication from my favorite scripture. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28 NKJV).

ABBREVIATIONS

CTT	Church Transition Team
MBC	Macedonia Baptist Church
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version

Transitions will happen with or without you, so why not prepare for them. We must expect transitions and change when we reach the top of our ladder — nothing is permanent.

—Sam Chand, *The Gift of Godly Discontent*

INTRODUCTION

As a pastor serving a multigenerational church and a church who has been plagued my transition in the areas of church leadership, it is so easy to feel unprepared and unqualified to lead my church to the next level. From handling pastoral care, sermon preparations, and spiritual attacks, there is never a dull moment or a moment of rest. The new challenge for today's churches will not be lack of preaching, worship, or limited buildings, it will be the lack of development for future leaders. The development of leaders for future ministry and equipping them to lead and mentor the next generation of leaders must be an absolute necessity for continued church success. My project focused on developing and training ministry leaders for transition and succession at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, to lead and mentor the next generation of leaders. All churches and their leaders will find themselves in some transition from time to time. Transition is difficult for everyone involved in it. However, it is also important to point out that transition does not discriminate, and it often comes without warning or a gentle head up.

The focus of my project was to develop a rubric and guide for my ministry context so that when transition happens, whether it is the pastor or the usher's ministry leader, the church can be prepared for moving forward with little to no setbacks because of the change. In my own ministry journey, I have always somehow been overwhelmed

with various and numerous transitions. It seems like every six to seven years of both my personal and ministerial journey, I was hit with some type of transition in my personal life and in my ministerial journey. These types of transitions every couple of years, without a warning, forced me to pivot and learn the importance of flexibility and creativity. The harsh but painful and sad reality is that there is no amount of leadership conferences, management books, pastoral podcasts, or even seminaries that can exempt you from having to deal with transitions. When examining the history and story of my present ministry context, Macedonia Baptist Church, and my personal journey, one common theme keeps weaving in and out of both settings: transition and planning. Transition is inevitable, so why not prepare for it. The problem that was identified in my context is there is need for preparing and developing leaders when it comes to leadership transition. There are very few things in life that happen without going through some type of transition and needing a plan after that transition occurs and takes place. This was the case when it came to transitions in Macedonia as well as other ministry settings that I have served in prior to Macedonia.

My hypothesis of this project is if key leaders of Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton Ohio, go through a six-week training on how to effectively transition from one leader to another, then those responsible for keeping things going will be better equipped to deal with leadership transition when it occurs again in the life of the church. Another problem and area I really sought to address is the perception and viewpoint on how those in church and leadership view leadership transitions and succession planning. With the expected outcome being to prepare and develop leaders for transition and succession at Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, the areas considered for biblical, historical,

theological, and interdisciplinary foundations all pointed towards areas and times of leadership transition.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, speaks to three primary areas. First, it gives an overview of my life's journey and faith walk with God. It begins by discussing my upbringing, educational journey, vocation, and the path that led me to ministry. Secondly, it explores my context of where I serve in ministry and the challenges that have come as a result of that journey. Thirdly, this section deals with the synergy and intersection of my personal life and ministry that led to this thesis and project on "transition and succession."

Chapter two, Biblical Foundations, deals with how a passage from the Old Testament speaks to the crux and example that God outlines for us in scripture as it pertains to transition and the need to prepare for it properly. Although I referenced the Book of Nehemiah in the initial stages of this journey of leadership transition and succession, the scripture that spoke to me came from Numbers 27:15-23. This selected scripture presents to me a perfect example and rubric for successful leadership transition and succession. Numbers 27:15-23 reads,

Moses said to the Lord, 'May the Lord, the God who gives breath to all living things, appoint someone over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.' So, the Lord said to Moses, 'Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit of leadership, and lay your hand on him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him. He is to stand before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by inquiring of the Urim before the Lord. At his command he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in.' Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly. Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the Lord instructed through Moses.

In Numbers 27, we see the changing of the guard when we find Moses at a turning point in his life and ministry. For the past eighty years of Moses' life and ministry, he has shared in the joys and the sorrows of the people that God has called him to lead and shepherd, but now we see in this chapter that God was telling him it was time for a new journey. This entire chapter deals with the transition from Moses to Israel's new leader. God makes that clear in verses 12-14 to everybody by announcing that Moses is going to die, and there will be a new leader. When Moses is informed, he is going to die and not make it to the Promise Land, his only request from God is not for the present but for the future. Moses does not ask God for more years; he asks for a successor and new leader for his flock. This text not only outlines the importance of preparing those whom you lead for the next season of leadership, this passage also speaks directly to the aim of my project of preparing congregations and leaders for what is next after your season of leadership is over.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations, deals with the historical piece of succession planning. Succession planning ensures that business continues to operate efficiently without the presence of people who were holding key positions as they must have retired, resigned, etc. Succession planning was introduced by Henri Fayol in 1918 who believed that if the succession plan were interrupted, the organization would not be ready for the necessary transition. As it relates to church and ministry, succession is about leadership reproduction. Succession planning focuses on leadership reproduction over leadership replacement and leads with a proactive posture, not a reactive one. Succession planning also provides continuity of leadership by cultivating leaders within the church or organization's leadership pipeline.

Succession is not only concerned with the top levels of leadership or the key leaders of the organization but is a long-term investment strategy in the organization's most valuable resource: its people. Every day, there are hundreds of hundreds of ministry leaders and pastors resigning from their roles and leadership positions with no systems or processes in place to keep the balls in motion. I believe that succession planning is one of the tools necessary and needed to ensure that the church, ministry, or organization does not stop when those in leadership move on or transition from the church.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations, looks at the specific theological fields of practical theology, process theology, liberation theology, ecclesiology, and systematic theology. These theological focuses address the subject matter and provide insight on how these disciplines can help facilitate change and support healthy transition in the context setting of Macedonia Baptist Church. Practical theology, as its name implies, is the study of theology in a way that is intended to make it useful or applicable. Process theology is a theological approach that understands ultimate reality in terms of a dynamic process of becoming and ongoing change. Liberation theology studies Christian theology that emphasizes liberation from social, political, and economic oppression as an anticipation of salvation. Systematic theology is an organized, comprehensive approach to defining Christian doctrine and beliefs. Ecclesiology is the study of the church and how the church must be a place that galvanizes and inspires, not ostracizes. Although I addressed several theological fields in my Theological Foundations section for my project, practical theology is one that stood out the most as it relates to preparing churches and leaders for transition.

Chapter five, Interdisciplinary Foundations, deals with the model of Adaptive Leadership. Adaptive leadership prepares leaders for changing environments. The church culture post pandemic will need this model of leadership to not only survive but thrive in ministry. Church culture is now more than ever a changing environment and I believe Adaptive leadership will be vital for the future growth of my context and the church in the years to come. Adaptive leaders are calm in situations when others panic, and they are always critically thinking so that they can remain two steps ahead of the organization. Leaders must be willing to change and adapt. It is not enough to have a plan; you also need the flexibility to adjust when needed. Adaptive leaders must be open-minded, embrace feedback, and take calculated risks. While all problems that could show up cannot be predetermined, adaptive leadership better prepares the leader and individual with problem-solving skills and proper planning strategies to deal with the ebbs and flows of transition. The foundations were selected with the goal of developing and preparing leaders for leadership transition and succession. We know that transition in leadership is inevitable, and all leaders are “interims” leaders because life is filled with swift transition.

Chapter six, Project Analysis, addresses several areas. First, it will restate the thesis’s hypothesis. It will also address the methodology used in the project, some of which are intervention, research design, measurement, and instrumentation. This project is of particular interest to me as a pastor because transition and lack of succession have affected me both personally and professionally. This project’s principles serve as a guide to developing a rubric and guide of developing and preparing those in the congregation and organization for transition and succession at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

The implementation of this project has helped not only those involved in my project but also the members of the congregation see transition from a whole new lens. Leadership development in pastoral transition and succession planning is essential to the church's continuation and effectiveness.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *for many* days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven” (Neh 1:4, NKJV).

When Nehemiah heard that the walls of Jerusalem were still broken down more than a half-century after the completion of the rebuilding of the temple, he began formulating a plan to remedy the situation in Jerusalem. So often in life, God permits some walls to be knocked down to develop your spiritual life and ultimately help prepare you for the assignment and calling in your life. I believe that God not only orchestrates the affairs of our lives, but He also permits seasons of struggle and challenge to accomplish the divine assignment and calling that He has placed on our lives. Nehemiah teaches that the valleys of life prepare us for future opportunities. These opportunities often lead to other important jobs or assignments that fulfill the purpose and calling that God has placed on our lives and ministries.

Considering the scripture above, concerning my context and ministry, I see a correlation between prayer and effective planning; these two areas directly affect one’s ministry. This is something that I have had to do over the last two pastorates, and even now I find myself doing in my third pastorate. I’m a firm believer that in life, nothing just happens spontaneously. In life, ministry, and leadership, one needs a plan. Almost

everything in life needs a plan. Good leaders are planners. They always think through where they are headed, and they do not waste time worrying about failure. Effective ministry leaders start with prayer and plan what God wants them to accomplish. Poor leaders assign blame, while great leaders take responsibility. Through this synergy paper, I will show how my path to my ministry in my previous pastorates is directly connected and interwoven with the context in which I am currently serving as a pastor. This paper will also compare my personal experience and ministry with my context, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio.

The combined synergy from my personal experience and church will help form the project that I will begin for the Doctor of Ministry project. Congregations past and present will be my context. The key theme I see in the context and myself is the act of transitioning and leading churches through change. Both congregations that I served before my present context have been churches where I felt God sent me in to be a “Nehemiah” and “rebuild the walls” while navigating the everchanging church culture and leading the congregation to be all that God has destined for her to become. If I could sum up my journey of life and ministry in one word, it would be “transition.”

Context

Macedonia is one of the largest churches in the Dayton metropolitan area and is located on the west side of Dayton, Ohio. Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, affectionately known as Macedonia-Dayton, is the context that where I am presently serving as pastor. Although Macedonia is my sixth transition in my ministry journey, she is my third and prayerfully final pastorate in my pastoral career. Macedonia is ninety-five

years old and has a long history of public success and private struggles. Macedonia has been shaped by the past wins, hurts, failures, successes, disappointments, tragedies, and missed opportunities of the past ninety-five years. Although Macedonia is one of the three largest Baptist congregations in Dayton, Ohio, many in the city have never been to Macedonia or heard of Macedonia's involvement in the community. Macedonia has only had seven pastors in its history, but the most notable pastors are the former three: Marcus T. Clark, Robert Baines, and Jamison Hunter. All three of my predecessors were phenomenal preachers and pastors, but that has not been without some leadership fumbles and ministry troubles along the way.

As the seventh pastor, I am viewed through the eyes of many members as a great combination of Clark, Baines, and Hunter, which are the three longest-serving pastors in the church's life. Macedonia loves my preaching and teaching, and they respect and support the vision that God has given me for the church. Pastor Marcus T. Clark was the longest-serving pastor to date that Macedonia has ever had, and it resulted in a beautiful foundation that has ever followed behind him. He had such a heart for God and people, especially seniors and young people. Pastor Clark had deep roots in the south, and many felt that he had a genuine love for people and his messages on Sundays and during the week were always centered around love.

During much of Pastor Clark's tenure, Macedonia grew exponentially spiritually, financially, and numerically and was considered an attractional church filled with good singing, good preaching, and a family-like atmosphere. Although Macedonia was growing in many ways during Clark's tenure, he faced great opposition from many members who felt that his soft-spoken voice was a welcome sign of being pushed to the

side. Pastor Clark was also considered a renaissance man because he was in the era of pastors who did it all, from cleaning the church, teaching Sunday school, preaching the word on Sunday, and whatever else fell in his lap daily. This led to very little time to organize Macedonia's church culture and structure. Pastor Clark was considered a giant in the Dayton community and a beloved pastor for Macedonia. His work helped shape the church context on Sunday and the rest of the week. Pastor Clark was succeeded by the election of the fifth pastor, Rev. Dr. Robert Baines.

Dr. Baines was an outstanding teacher, preacher, and an incredible administrator. Although Dr. Baines was not as charismatic as Rev. Clark, he had a presence and confidence that made people feel secure in his leadership. Dr. Baines was from New York, which meant adapting to the slower pace in Dayton, Ohio.

Pastor Baines had a military background, which meant that he sometimes ruled and led the church with a militant and non-negotiable leadership style. This was new for Macedonia because during Pastor Clark's tenure, there were regular quarterly business meetings, which ultimately turned into shouting and fussing sessions where members would dump and unload all their complaints onto the lap of pastor Clark. This all ended once pastor Baines walked into the door as senior pastor. He made it known that he was sent and called by God, and that serving the Lord and the church had to be done with excellence. Pastor Baines started moving Macedonia from an attractional church known for long services and many church programs to a missional church.

Baines was attempting to correct a culture that had been that way for over forty years; so, facing opposition and challenges became the norm of his tenure. The difference between Clark and Baines was that Baines was not afraid of a battle or constantly did not

back down at all from those who rose against him in his pastoral initiatives. This was new for Macedonia because they were so used to getting their way with pastor Clark; they had the mentality that they could outtalk him, outthink him, and override some of his decisions for the church. Although the first few years for Rev. Baines at Macedonia were challenging in some areas related to his leadership style, Macedonia experienced exponential growth in ways that none of them had imagined when the call was extended to Baines. However, by the tail end of Baines's tenure, many had become fed up with his no-nonsense approach to leadership, and membership and morale went down tremendously.

Although there was structure in Macedonia administratively, there seemed to be no excitement for the overall church. By the time Rev. Jamison Hunter arrived at Macedonia in 2009, the morale at Macedonia was extremely low, and the church attendance was lower because of Dr. Baines's nonsense approach to ministry and people's involvement in ministry. It seemed that his strong-handed leadership style finally took its toll on the church's culture.

Those who were still left at Macedonia upon the arrival of Dr. Hunter were grateful for the labor of Dr. Baines but were ready for something new, fresh, and innovative in terms of leadership and ministry approach. And with a keen sense of excitement and anticipation in the air, the Lord rapidly took Macedonia to new heights. In only a few years, the membership more than doubled with youth, young adults, and former members who had left Macedonia during the Baines era. In addition, the newness of a new leader brought many new people into Macedonia who had not even stepped foot in the facility before Hunter's tenure.

Although the church was growing with new members and old members were being excited about church again on a new level, the church administration that Baines put into place began to crumble in some ways. Many of those who were strong administratively during Baines's tenure were now either too tired to work or could not keep up with the fast pace of Hunter. Many of the new members who joined Macedonia during this time were young and unfamiliar with tithing and how it hugely affects the church. Therefore, the faithful core members were still financially carrying much more of the growing church. This did not stop or hinder Macedonia's numerical growth and excitement; before you knew it, Macedonia filled up both worship services on Sunday mornings. There were so many people that the deacons of Macedonia stood the entire worship service due to not having a place to sit on Sundays because of the high attendance. After a year of being at full compacity in the old edifice, a church meeting was called, and Macedonia decided it was time and necessary due to rapid growth to expand and build a new church. It was a season of excitement and joy in the life of Macedonia. Dr. Hunter and the members of Macedonia prayed about it and decided to build and erect a new edifice. Dr. Hunter led the church in an internal campaign to liquidate \$600,000 owed on the multipurpose facility.

Macedonia began to raise the money to pay for the multipurpose center that we now call Baines Hall and began moving towards building a new facility. During this season, members of Macedonia were encouraged and motivated to see their vision come to reality. Still, the giving had slowed down by this point. While there was excitement about all that God was doing, many members of Macedonia were on fixed incomes, and many of those who were joining the church still were not tithing regularly, which put a

strain on the project's timetable. The building campaign started in 2015, and the project was eventually completed in 2017, but it was met with mixed emotions from those in the congregation.

This was largely due to the preaching and itinerant schedule of Dr. Hunter. He was being invited to preach and lecture all over the country, and God was opening new doors for him. Still, many in Macedonia felt that with a building project that rested heavily on his presence and voice in motivating the people to give, he was not there as much as they felt he needed to be in Macedonia. This ultimately put a strain on the relationship between the pastor and the people. Many felt that pastor Hunter did not want to be at Macedonia and in Dayton by some of the comments he made from the pulpit and his involvement with things in the Dayton community. Macedonia was a community-involved church from the many years of Clark's and Baines's tenure.

Many felt that Rev. Hunter was not connected because he ultimately did not seek a long-term relationship with Macedonia or Dayton, Ohio. On top of these concerns and strained relationships with some of the flock in Macedonia, you throw in a global pandemic that shut down the world, including Macedonia. Like most churches in the country, Macedonia was not ready or prepared for a pandemic that would change how we do church, ministry, and lead God's people.

This was a perfect storm for a tired pastor and a heavily pastoral-driven church, meaning that if he did not give the directive, they did not move at all. Dr. Hunter resigned from Macedonia on August 30, 2020. When I arrived at Macedonia in March of 2021, I arrived at a church shaped by the past wins, hurts, failures, successes, disappointments, tragedies, and missed opportunities of the past ninety-five years. I am viewed through the

eyes of many members as a great combination of Clark, Baines, and Hunter, which are the three longest-serving pastors in the church's life. Macedonia loves my preaching and teaching, and they respect and support the vision that God has given me for the church. Many believe that Macedonia will not be my last stop in my pastoral journey.

Many of the members of Macedonia are skeptical that once I receive my doctorate or achieve more success than my previous congregations, I will leave them and Dayton because they do not see many people wanting to live and stay in Dayton, Ohio, for the long haul. This context has been their reality for my last two predecessors, so it is hard for them to see anything else beyond that picture. However, upon my arrival on March 1, 2021, I hit the ground running, and there has been a lot of change for the better this last year. One of my first assignments was developing a safe and practical way to lead the congregation back inside the church through a hybrid model of worship, which offers both in-person and online worship services.

Moving the church back to in-person worship services has allowed me to get a good snapshot of the church culture and context and try to rebuild some walls that were torn down over the last several years. Many of the members were not as personable as the last two pastors based on the pastors' personalities. Still, they seem to be very engaging with me since I am an extrovert in terms of personality.

Since my arrival at the church, over one hundred and seventy-five new members have united with the Macedonia with about thirty members living outside of Dayton, Ohio. The church's finances have more than doubled. The community involvement has increased tremendously with relaunching of Macedonia's Community Development Corporation, which is the community arm of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. We

have formed partnerships with Sinclair Community College, Kettering Health, and the Dayton Police Department to combat some of the issues plaguing the west side of Dayton, where Macedonia calls home. After surveying the church and going to God, we have tagged 2022 as “The Year of the Reset.” the Book of Nehemiah as my backdrop and using this book as the rubric and guide for my preaching and teaching for the entire year. Nehemiah was a master planner and gave us a biblical model for doing so in ministry.

Journey

Remember ye, not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert (Isaiah 43:18-19, King James Version).

Interestingly, this scripture points out that before God can do a new thing, we must properly transition from the old thing. This has been seemingly the mantra of my pastoral ministry and journey even before my first full-time ministry position in 2010. In 2010, I had just recently graduated from Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, and my wife and I moved back home to Macon, Georgia. Although we were reluctant to go, it made financial sense to relocate back home. My wife had landed a job at Geico Insurance Co, and I was offered a youth and young adult pastor position at Macedonia Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Eddie D. Smith Sr.

I had also just been accepted to Mercer University McAfee School of Theology for their master’s program in ministry, so it seemed to be a good decision for both of us. My marriage and work during those first years seemed to go well, and I began to grow spiritually serving the youth at Macedonia. Pastor Smith would often pull me aside to

pour into me lessons on becoming a better preacher and administrator. These lessons are still blessing me today, many years later.

After about three years of serving at Macedonia, Rev. Smith recommended me to a church that called me to be their pastor. I was excited and happy because of the call, yet I was nervous and scared because of the location of my first pastorate at Great Faith Progressive Missionary Baptist Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I was twenty-six years old when I was called to serve as the senior pastor of Great Faith, and although I thought I was prepared to lead with my ministry experience as a youth and young adult pastor and with some seminary experience, I was in for a lesson that the seminary and my time in the third chair could not properly prepare me for in Milwaukee.

We announced to the youth and young adults on Monday, October 31, 2011, that we had received a call to lead a congregation in Milwaukee. So, we stayed and worked in the Macedonia Church until my last day on November 22, 2011. That chapter was now closed, and a new one was about to begin, which was my first ministry transition in my journey. The second transition began on Saturday, December 4, 2011, with our move from Macon, Georgia, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I can vividly remember Malloree and me driving those sixteen hours from Georgia talking about this new beginning and how we felt God calling us to do something new and fresh. We also talked about how this was a huge leap of faith and how different things would be not having any blood relatives for family near us.

We arrived in Milwaukee on that Saturday evening and got settled into our new apartment, and we were so exhausted that all we did was shower and go straight to sleep. The next day was Sunday, and we woke up to four inches of snow, so one of the deacons

at our new church, Great Faith, came by and picked us up for church since we were not used to driving in the snow. When we arrived at Great Faith for service, there were balloons in my office, and the people were so eager and excited to welcome Malloree and me to the church. This was not only a new season for Malloree and me, but it was also a new season in the life of Great Faith. I was their second pastor, and they had never had to go through a pastoral search process because the pastor before me organized the church thirty years ago after he was voted out of another church in the city.

That first service as the pastor was amazing. The spirit was so high, the music was soul-stirring, and souls were saved and added to the church. My first three years at Great Faith were nothing short of amazing, and God's favor was evident in my life and ministry because I did not have a clue what I was doing as a pastor. I was always taught to love God, love the people, preach Christ, go home, and let God do the rest. That strategy seemed to work for me those first three years. The fourth year was the year where I was met with opposition and challenges because the growth of the church scared those who had been in leadership for many years.

During this time, there were attacks on my character and rumors that I was trying to make the church into a megachurch. Things finally came to a head in my fifth year during a church business meeting when one of my deacons stated that I had too much power and asked that the church vote rewrite the by-laws. He felt that the deacon's ministry should control the pastor and wanted the church to vote on every decision that the pastor made.

I challenged him and all those with him at the meeting, and I was met with a backlash of the same people I had served and loved in good and bad times. I remember

leaving the church meeting in tears and wanting to quit and go back to Georgia. At this moment, I called my pastor back in Georgia and shared the struggles and challenges that I was facing at the church. My pastor prayed for me, encouraged me, and told me to go and serve the people of God. I did exactly that for about six months, and one Sunday morning, I heard God clearly say to me in my office, “today is your final day here at Great Faith.” It scared me so much that tears started falling down my eyes, but I knew it was God’s voice. I went out to the second service that was already in progress, and when it came time to preach, I mounted the pulpit and shared with the congregation that my last day at Great Faith would be that day. I shared with the congregation that I was tired of fighting, and I felt that God had released me from Great Faith. I did an altar prayer, gave the benediction, packed my office, and went out the back door.

As I exited the Great Faith church parking lot, this officially began my third transition in my ministry journey. On that same day, I received a request from a senior usher asking Mallorie and me if we would meet her and a few members of Great Faith at the local library the next day to properly say their goodbyes as they knew I had my mindset on going back home to Georgia. When we arrived at the Capitol Drive Library on Monday, June 5, 2016, over ninety people were in attendance who only made one statement, “Pastor Ellis, we know that your season is over at Great Faith, but we can still head into a new direction.”

On that night, New Direction Christian Church was birthed, and seventy-four of those people in attendance joined the ministry that same day! New Direction decided to model our ministry from the scripture: “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new” (2 Cor 5:17, NRSV).

On Sunday, June 12, 2016, we had our first worship service at 8:00 a.m. in the main sanctuary of Grace Fellowship Church. In that initial worship service, over forty additional members united with the New Direction Christian Church family. By the end of 2017, we were experiencing explosive church growth. During this season, the members of New Direction began reaching out to their families and friends and began asking them to sow into New Direction to help us make the vision of having our place of worship a reality. By June 6, 2018, which was the Second Church Anniversary of New Direction Christian Church, we had raised 58,000 dollars in cash. On Thursday, August 16, 2018, I went to Columbia Savings Bank & Trust with a down payment of \$55,000 towards purchasing a church building located at 2127 W. Garfield Avenue in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The bank was so surprised and amazed that our young church had this kind of commitment to raising funds and buying a church building that they approved New Direction for the loan to purchase a church building located at 2127 W. Garfield Avenue in the downtown area of Milwaukee. On Sunday, September 30, 2018, we held our first worship service in our building. Over the next two years, I was preaching, teaching, and casting the vision for the church, but in January of 2020, I heard God clearly say while getting dressed for work, “I have something else for you to do in another place.” I did not pay any attention to it and shrugged it off. This was the beginning of my fourth transition in my ministry journey.

On March 15, 2020, New Direction held her last in-person worship service due to the threat and rise of COVID-19. I went from having a growing packed church on Sundays with two worship services to preaching to an ipad and computer screen in an

empty church. I was scared, devastated, and unprepared for what was happening. It was during this time that God's voice got louder and clearer.

By August 2020, I was physically exhausted, spiritually drained, and emotionally spent. I shared my condition with my wife, and she shared with me that she had a dream that God was getting ready to move us to a new place, and we immediately went into prayer about what God was saying to both of us. Then, on the third Sunday of September 2020, I got a call from Rev. Jamey Colts, who leads a church in Middletown, Ohio. I had not spoken to him in months, but he called to tell me that God put me on his mind about a church in Ohio. I immediately shut it down and said that I was not leaving New Direction. Pastor Colts said he understood but called me every week and said that God kept putting me on his mind about a church in Dayton, Ohio.

One day, my wife was home and heard the conversation between Pastor Colts and myself and told me when I hung up the phone to stay open and apply and leave it in God's hands. Malloree said that if God did not want me to go, He would not allow me to go to Dayton. I listened to my wife and applied on the last day of the application deadline. This was the beginning of my fifth transition in my ministry journey.

After not hearing anything for months since my initial electronic resume was sent to them from an automated system, one day while working from home, I got a call from a pastoral search committee member from Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton. I answered the phone, and she informed me that the committee was impressed with my resume and wanted to do a Zoom interview. I was shocked but agreed to interview them. The Zoom interview was scheduled for the day before Thanksgiving, and I agreed to do it on that day. Once in the Zoom interview, I heard God say this is your next assignment,

and throughout the interview, it felt like I had been knowing the committee members for years. Three weeks after the interview, I was asked by the search committee to come to Dayton, Ohio, to deliver a sermon in person as a pastoral finalist in the process. I was nervous, excited, and prayerful all at the same time.

On January 17, 2021, I stood in the pulpit of Macedonia for the very first time and preached a sermon on the “Power of Prayer” dealing with the prayer of Hezekiah, and exactly two weeks later, I was called to be the seventh pastor of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. While I was excited about “my next assignment” in receiving the call to come and lead Macedonia in Dayton, I was also sad about leaving New Direction and the city of Milwaukee. However, if I am being completely transparent and honest, looking back now, leaving New Direction was a hard but the best decision that I ever made in ministry. So, Malloree, our son Jarvis Ellis, II, and I moved to Dayton in March of 2021, which started my sixth transition in my ministry journey.

Synergy

When looking at my present ministry context and my journey, one common theme keeps weaving in and out of both settings: transition and planning. There are very few things in life that happen without going through some type of transition and needing a plan after that transition occurs and takes place. At the very beginning of this paper, I referenced the life of Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the wall. Nehemiah was an effective leader not because of his preaching ability but also his ability to pray, cast vision, remain flexible, and use foresight.

Nehemiah gives us a blueprint for effective leadership and ministry after major transitions. Looking at my present context, so much of Macedonia's growth and failures have rested tremendously on how they handled and navigated transitions in the church's life. When reviewing the full picture and context, Macedonia does weekend worship well. Some view this worship ministry and church attendance as good; however, it is not a substitute for outreach and community involvement. One of the things that Macedonia does not do well is using that same excitement and vision statement they quote at the beginning of a new year and turning it into a reality in ministry beyond the walls of the church.

Most of the tension and friction I feel between my past predecessors and the church members has rested heavily on leadership abilities and not preaching prowess. Macedonia is known for having great singing, good preaching, and a great time in worship, but beyond Sunday morning, there is a disconnect between excitement and execution. The synergy between Macedonia and both Great Faith and New Direction is mind-blowing and unnerving to me. All three churches are great on high church but not good on the ministry leadership follow through after the benediction. I believe that effective change happens when effective leadership is at the helm. Unfortunately, all three churches lacked the strong ministry leadership needed to propel the church and ministry to the next level. Before my arrival, all three churches had no clear or defined process on the roadmap to see the vision come to fruition beyond a worship or fellowship initiative.

All three churches had great preachers before me but were not as effective in moving from membership to discipleship. All three churches, in my opinion, were in

transition upon arrival and had experienced some walls being destroyed or torn down in some way. I believe Nehemiah gives us a biblical model and clear process for rebuilding amid transition. He had never built a wall before, and he had a massive challenge in front of him when he returned to Jerusalem, but he did not allow being in transition to stop him from being effective.

He prayed, developed a plan, and worked on his plan. His role changed from royal cupbearer to governor of Judah, utilizing leadership strategies to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, which was in a major state of transition. My goal would be to develop a project using some principles and processes from Nehemiah to address the importance of seeing transition as an opportunity to rebuild what has been torn down and develop effective leaders. Nehemiah was an ordinary person whom God used to do an extraordinary mission.

He could have easily lamented and complained that the walls were torn down and destroyed, but Nehemiah understood that effective leaders contribute to change and not the complaining department. Nehemiah not only followed God's calling to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, but he also trusted God to help him do it.

Conclusion

All churches and their leaders will find themselves in some transition from time to time. Transition is difficult for everyone involved in it. However, it is also important to point out that transition does not discriminate, and it often comes without warning or a gentle heads up. The pandemic has put all churches and their leaders in transition. I believe that long after the COVID-19 pandemic has ceased, there will be plenty of lasting

and long-term effects on the church. Even as I am writing this conclusion, I am also responding to an email from a pastoral colleague who has just resigned from his church due to the weight and demand of leading and serving people in a pandemic.

I believe this will be happening more and more if we do not develop a process and system for developing effective leaders in the church and not putting all the weight and responsibility solely on the pastor. Although Macedonia is a loving, caring, and compassionate church, some weight distribution issues need to be worked out and redistributed so that the church does not become a revolving door for transition. Macedonia has great potential, and the opportunities for continued growth are endless. Still, if there is not a process for developing effective leadership beyond the pastor, it can lead to bigger issues.

After reviewing the church's analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, I am encouraged that I will be able to navigate through them with God's help and the Holy Spirit's guide. Every church has its share of challenges and issues, but Macedonia is such a tremendous and significant church in love, its heart for God, and its people. We are mega in my eyes, not in terms of membership but about the ministry we are now providing for the membership and community.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

If I could sum up my journey of life and ministry in one word, it would be “transition.” Leadership and transition are subjects that many leaders in the church and organizations seldom talk about — let alone plan for. The reality for most in ministry and leadership is most leaders will not finish their lives in the churches and roles of leadership they are currently in. Change in leadership is inevitable, and the reality in life and ministry is leaders will leave those positions one day. Every pastor, minister, or leader is in their role for a season because nothing in life is permanent under the sun, but that does not mean you do not plan for it.

Transition will happen, which is why you need a plan. In most congregations and ministry settings, there is no succession plan or guide for the next leader coming into the new role. This has been the case for the last two congregations that I have served as pastor. Every congregation I have served has had a pulpit search committee to select and call a pastor, but there has been no guide or plan for what to do after you have been selected to lead. This does not have to be the case when there is a clear biblical recorded plan for healthy transition.

If we know that transition in leadership will change at some point in life in the future, why not plan for it the way the scripture has taught to do so. The Bible is full of

examples from the Old Testament to the New Testament on what healthy transitions look like in the life of the church. Although each of them comes with a different set of scenarios and circumstances, the bottom line is there was a time of transition when leadership changed hands. We have the biblical examples of Moses to Joshua, Samuel to Saul, David to Solomon, Elijah to Elisha, Paul to Timothy and ultimately Jesus to His apostles.

Leadership transition is not only biblical but also logical as well. Churches are dying not because of lack of anointing, lack of people, or lack of resources, but a lack of proper planning. I am a firm believer that in life, nothing just happens spontaneously. In life, ministry, and leadership, you need a plan. Transition will inevitably happen to all of us while we are in the role of leadership, which is why we need to make sure that we are planning at the beginning with the end in sight. Effective ministry leaders not only start with prayer, but they also start with a plan. In my Synergy chapter, the theme of transition was the overwhelming theme from my childhood all the way to my present context and third pastorate. For my biblical foundations paper, the Lord has led me to the Old Testament book of Numbers 27:15-23.

Moses said to the Lord, ‘May the Lord, the God who gives breath to all living things, appoint someone over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.’ So, the Lord said to Moses, ‘Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit of leadership, and lay your hand on him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him. He is to stand before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by inquiring of the Urim before the Lord. At his command he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in.’ Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly. Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the Lord instructed through Moses.

This text not only outlines the importance of preparing those whom you lead for the next season of leadership, this passage also speaks directly to the aim of my project of preparing congregations and leaders for what is next after your season of leadership is over.

Historical/Social Context

The Book of Numbers has traditionally been ascribed to Moses as the author. This conclusion is based on statements concerning Moses' writing activity and the assumption that the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch, is a unit and comes from one author. This is a traditional opinion for several reasons because Moses recorded events that happened and wrote about them. We see this in Numbers 33:2 and all throughout the Book of Exodus as well. Moses was educated and could write well due to living in the palace of the king of Egypt.

Moses was called by the Lord to lead the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, through the wilderness, and to the promised land of Canaan. Moses witnessed most of the events recorded in the book of Numbers. He may have relied on other witnesses, written sources, or revelation for information concerning events he did not see, such as the interactions between Baalam and Balak (see Numbers 22-24).¹

There are other opinions and other scholars who suggest that several people wrote Numbers. They think some of these people were priests and some were scribes or editors from later periods of Israel's history. They support their claims with the protestation of

¹ The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, "Introduction to the Book of Numbers," <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/old-testament-seminary-teacher-manual/introduction-to-the-book-of-numbers?lang=eng>.

the humility of Moses seen in Numbers 12:3. However, many scholars attribute Moses as the person who wrote the essential content of the book. The Book of Numbers is the fourth book in the Pentateuch and one of the first five books of the Bible. This book is not one complete story with a beginning, middle, and end.²

The entire Book of Numbers follows Moses and Israel's journey from the foot of Mount Sinai to the edge of the promised land of Canaan. The Book of Numbers has three major divisions based on Israel's geographical locations. Each of the three divisions are broken down by: (1) the Israelites at the start of their journey (chapters 1-10); (2) the Israelites travel through the desert (chapters 11-20; and (3) the Israelites prepare to enter the Promise Land (chapters 21-36).³

The Book of Numbers was written around 1450-1410 BC⁴ and it was written to the people of Israel to document their journey to the Promised Land; but it also written to remind all future readers of the Bible that God is with us as we journey towards heaven.

The events of the book began in the second year after the Israelites departed Egypt as they camped at Mount Sinai around 1444 BC (Num 1:1). The narrative ends thirty-eight years later "in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho" (Num 36:13) in 1406 BC. The Book of Numbers records the people's long wandering in the desert of Sinai, their time at the oasis of Kadesh, and their eventual arrival at the banks of the Jordan River across from the Promised Land.

² J. Zavada, "Introduction to the Book of Numbers," <https://www.learnreligious.com/book-of-numbers-701116>.

³ Bible Study Tools, "The Book of Numbers," <https://www.bibletools.com/numbers/>.

⁴ Cally Logan, "The Book of Numbers," Christianity.com, <https://www.christianity.com/bible/niv/numbers/>.

Numbers

	Preparation Census Organization Sanctification CHAPTERS 1-9	Pessimism Complaining Doubting Promised Land rejected <i>CHAPTERS</i> 10-14	Punishment Wandering Old generation dies New census CHAPTERS 15-36
	Mount Sinai	En route to Kadesh-barnea	Wilderness wandering
Time	20 days	Several months	38 years
Key Word	Wilderness		
	The price of disbelief and disobedience		
Key Verses	14:22-23		
Christ in	Pictured in manna (compare John 6:31 —33); water from rock (compare Corinthians 10:4); bronze serpent (compare John 3:14); in Balaam's prophecy (Numbers 24:17); pillar of cloud and of fire; cities of refuge		

5

Theme of the Book of Numbers

During the time that Numbers was written, there were several themes and things happening such as human rebellion, divine punishment, divine provision, laws, Moses' leadership, and God's covenant with Abraham.

Human Rebellion

The human rebellion appeared because of the Israelites rebelling against God and Moses. They were complaining about lack of food, water, how they were going to be crushed by their enemies, and they even complained about the leadership of Moses. From human rebellion, we see the theme of divine punishment. Because of the constant

⁵ Charles R. Swindoll, "Numbers," *Insight on the Bible*, 1978, 1996, 2009, <https://www.insightsforliving.ca/read/insights-bible/numbers>.

complaining by the Israelites, there were several instances where God killed rebellious Israelites with fire, plague, and snakes.

Divine Punishment and Divine Provision

There were even instances where Moses called to God for help when the people turn on him, and God punished them directly. From divine punishment, we see the theme of divine provision. Even though the Israelites were rebellious and complained often, God still extended mercy to them. Rather than killing off the whole nation in the wilderness, he waits for the rebellious generation to die and preserves the younger people. God continued to provide manna — that mysterious bread from heaven.

Laws

All throughout the Book of Numbers we see many instances and episodes where a new set of laws given to the people. What makes this theme unique is Numbers does not have the big, bulky sets of laws we see in the latter half of Exodus, Leviticus, and almost the whole of Deuteronomy, but there are still plenty of guidelines, rules, outlines for the Israelites.

From additional laws, we see Moses emerging as the people's leader. We see firsthand how he deals with the pressures of leading a new nation. We also see Moses' humanity as a leader and even at one point asking God why he must bear the burden of leading them.

During this season of Moses' leadership, he feels unappreciated and not effective as a leader while trying to navigate them out of the wilderness. Moses gets the point

where he tells God, “I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. If this is how you are going to treat me, please go ahead and kill me” (Nm 11:14-15).⁶

God’s Covenant with Abraham

But even though Moses feels inadequate as a leader, God makes it clear to those he is leading that Moses is His chosen prophet. Finally, we see God’s covenant with Abraham as the final theme in the Book of Numbers. Back in Genesis, God made a pact with Abraham, saying that one day his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan, and through those people all the nations of the world would be blessed. Canaan was the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Jewish people grew in numbers during their 400 years of slavery in Egypt. There were now strong enough with God’s help to conquer and populate the Promised Land. We see the theme and picture that God’s word is good, He rescues His people, stands by them, and is always at work fulfilling His promises to Abraham throughout the book of Numbers.

Canonical Context

The Book of Numbers was added to the Bible because it records census results for all twelve tribes not once, but twice.⁷ Numbers also documents priestly instructions for handling the Ark of the Covenant, the tabernacle, and it even spells out the placement of

⁶ Enduring Word.com, “Numbers 27 – Laws of Inheritance and the Next Leader,” <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/numbers-27/>.

⁷ Eugene H. Merrill, *Numbers*, The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament, ed. John F. Walwood and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 215.

the tribes when they camped. As a history of the nation not yet established, this book unveils significant events referenced later in Scripture. I also believe Numbers was added to the Bible to demonstrate that God's covenant plan stays on track even when His people do not stay on track.

All throughout Numbers, we see how the people of Israel tested God's patience, and He in turn tested their endurance and faithfulness. Though the people failed many times, God showed His own faithfulness by His constant presence leading the way — through a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. This book also reveals how God reminded Israel that He does not tolerate rebellion, complaining, and disbelief without invoking consequences.

He taught His people how to walk with Him — not just with their feet through the wilderness but with their mouths in worship, hands in service, and lives as witnesses to the surrounding nations. He was their God, they were His people, and He expected them to act like it. The people of Israel were blessed not because of what they did or did not do; they were blessed because they were God's people, and He made a promise to them.

The journey and events of the Jewish people in the book of Numbers holds much significance for us today. Knowing that the Lord has specific reasoning for His commands is one of those. Obedience requires faith in action. Just as the Israelites were commanded specific duties in roles and purifications, there was a greater goal these steps would lead to. God may urge our hearts in a certain way, and it is vital we obey, for the Lord wastes nothing. His plans and paths all serve a vital role in where He is leading us.

God will get His point across in various ways, and the book of Numbers can teach us to press into the various ways He will speak. This book also provides different ways

He spoke, quite different than the typical ways from Balaam's donkey speaking audible words in Numbers 22 to the dreams and visions prophets received, or direct words Moses received Numbers 12. What we can learn from this is that the Lord desires to communicate with His people. Ever caring and longing for authentic relationship with us, God will use anything in His Kingdom to connect with us, but it falls upon our hearts to respond or not.

Overall Theme of Book of Numbers: Trust and Obedience

Knowing that the Lord is faithful and all He says will come to pass is not only the overall theme of Numbers but also something to be grasped and absorbed today. Numbers 23:18 (NRSV) says, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should change His mind. Does He promise and not fulfill?" The Lord kept every single promise to the great Nation of Israel. This entire book is on the importance of trust and obedience. The Israelites frequently failed to trust and obey God in the hours of their trials, and consequently, God postponed His blessing. Most of them never enjoyed the good things that God had for them. Numbers shows us how a holy God dwells with His people. God keeps His promises that He made to Abraham and His promises to bless and punish Israel. This biggest lesson this book teaches in relation to the overall story of God, Jesus, and the church is the importance of walking in obedience.

Detailed Analysis

The first five books in the Bible are called the "5 Books of Moses." The Book of Numbers is the fourth of these books. The Hebrew name for these books is the "Torah,"

which means “Law.” These books are very important. They contain God’s instructions about how his people should live. This book is called “Numbers” because there are many lists of numbers in it. There are two censuses (Nm 1:1 to 4:49; Nm 26). The Hebrew name for this book is “In the desert.” This name describes well what the book is about. The book begins two years after the Israelites had escaped from the country called Egypt. They had been slaves there. They had made a camp in the Sinai desert.⁸ God had given the Law to Moses. They were preparing to go to the Promised Land.

The Division of the Book of Numbers

The Book of Numbers can really be broken down into three divisions or major acts in a long story. The first act would cover Numbers 1-13, which would cover the Israelites preparing to leave Sinai. In this act, we see Moses taking a census of the people in Israel. Israel had been camping in the wilderness for a year and now it was time to move. Moses gave them orders for how the twelve tribes should position themselves as they camp and as they move through the wilderness with the tabernacle of God being the center of the camp. In these first ten chapters, we see new laws, rituals and sacrifices take place. In chapters 11-12, we see their journey from Sinai to Paran, which is not a pleasant journey. In these two chapters, we see the people complaining against God and Moses and as a result, God sends fire and a plague. We also see Moses’ brother Aaron and sister Miriam speak out against him and Miriam is afflicted with leprosy.⁹

⁸ Marion Adams, *The Old Testament Book of Numbers – In The Desert*, 2009, <https://www.easyenglish.bible/bible-commentary/numbers-lbw.htm>.

⁹ J. Kranz, “Numbers: The 40 Year Journey to the Promised Land,” <https://overviewbible.com/numbers/>.

In Act 2, which covers Numbers 13-21, we see Israel rejecting the land. In chapters 13-19, the Israelites get about halfway to Canaan, and Moses sends twelve spies into the land to scope it out. Two of them, Joshua and Caleb, tell the people that the land is good, and God will give it to them. The other ten do not have enough confidence that they can take the land because they believe the forces protecting Canaan outmatch Israel. So, they all turn on their leader Moses. Because of their fear, God tells them they will die in the wilderness, and he will give the land to their children. Because of Moses' frustration with them, he also disobeys God in front of the people, and he too is prohibited from entering the Promised Land. In the final act of Numbers, which covers chapters 22-36, we see King Balak who is the King of Moab, hiring a prophet named Balaam to pronounce a curse on Israel.

Instead of Balaam cursing Israel, God uses him to bless them. The Israelites camp out near Moab, but they begin to take on Moabite ways and customs and end up taking Moabite prostitutes and worship Baal. As a punishment, we see God sending a plague that destroys many Israelites. After the plague is when we see the second census take place and we also see the preparation for a new leader, which brings me to Numbers 27, which is my chosen biblical text for this paper.

In Numbers 27, we see the changing of the guard when we find Moses at a turning point in his life and ministry. For the past eighty years of Moses' life and ministry, he has shared in the joys and the sorrows of the people that God has called him to lead and shepherd, but now we see in this chapter that God was telling him it was time for a new journey. This entire chapter deals with the transition from Moses to Israel's new leader. God makes that clear in verses 12-14 to everybody by announcing that Moses

is going to die, and there will be a new leader. When Moses is informed he is going to die and not make it to the Promise Land, his only request from God is not for the present but for the future.¹⁰

Moses does not ask God for more years; he asks for a successor and new leader for his flock. Verses 15-17 says, Moses said to the Lord, “May the Lord, the God who gives breath to all living things, appoint someone over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.” Verse 15 describes the attitude and posture of Moses.

The behavior of Moses also shows how singularly and touchingly disinterested he was in the punishment. Moses makes a prayer request to God concerning the next shepherd for the children of Israel. Moses’ request is not only that a new leader take his place, but also that the new leader reap for himself and Israel the reward of all his toil and patience. We can see a great picture of Moses’ pastoral heart for Israel.

Many of us would have asked for God’s forgiveness or God’s mercy, but Moses’ first and immediate response to the Lord’s judgment on him is do not let my congregation be without a leader and shepherd. Imagine being so devoted to serving, so devoted to God’s people, that the day you find out you are dying, and your only question is who will keep my ministry going? This verse speaks to the character of Moses.

And not only does Moses’ petition God for a new leader but he goes into detail and specificity about what the next leader of Israel should look like and resemble as it

¹⁰ J. Kranz, “Numbers: The 40 Year Journey to the Promised Land,” <https://overviewbible.com/numbers/>.

relates to leadership qualities. Verses 16-17 talks about his request for the next leader to be faithful and committed. Moses goes on to ask God to appoint somebody who loves them, who cares about them, who loves God, loves God's word, and one who will be obedient. This is Moses' asking that his successor not only be skilled and trained, but also faithful over Israel.

Moses' seems to be clear in his prayer petition to God, that he wants a successor who is committed to doing the work and not simply occupying a role and title in name only. Moses' knew the pitfalls and trouble that come with leadership and shepherding people, which is why he was more concerned with his successor's character and skillset as a leader.

Robert Gane states, "Being a good shepherd or herdsman toughness and courage, involving exposure to all kinds of discomfort, irritations, and perils (Gn 31:40; 1 Sm 17:34-35). Being a good shepherd of human beings is no less challenging. It requires toughness, humility, and the ability to lead rather than drive."¹¹

In verses 18-20, we see God's answer to Moses' prayer request in verses 15-16 with the selection of Moses' successor. The Lord is gracious, and He answers Moses' prayer for a shepherd for the people, and He appoints Joshua to be that shepherd. Joshua is chosen by God to be Moses' successor and to serve as a co-ruler for a time. God tells Moses to appoint Joshua in front of everyone, and to give him some of his authority so that the people Moses is leading can see the trust he has in Joshua as his successor.

¹¹ Bibleoutlines.com, "Commissioning of Joshua to Succeed Moses," <https://www.bibleoutlines.com/blog/numbers-2715-23-commissioning-of-joshua-to-succeed-moses>.

According to Raymond Brown, the retiring leader had to be willing to hand over some of those responsibilities that he had carried for many years to endorse and empower the next leader. Joshua's appointment by Moses' would overlap with his and together they would be co-rulers over the people of God, and the people of God would have time to become accustomed to Joshua's leadership. During that transitional and interim period, Israel would come to trust Joshua's leadership, and the transition of leadership from Moses' to Joshua would be a relatively smooth one.

When we arrive to verse 21, we see something very interesting happen between Moses' and Joshua. Verse 21 says, "And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. This verse points to the changing of guards in how things would be handled with the election of the new leader. During the time of Moses' reign, Moses spoke with the Lord face to face. The Lord gave Moses a word, and Moses turned around and gave that word to the people. But with Joshua, he was now required to go to Eleazar the priest.¹²

This points to the essential difference between Moses and Joshua, and all who came after until the "Prophet like unto" Moses was raised up. Moses was as much above the priests as he was above the tribe princes; but Joshua was only the civil and military head of the nation and was as much subordinate to the high priest in one way as the high priest was subordinate to him in another. In after times, no doubt, the political headship

¹² Bible Hub, "Numbers 27:21," *The Pulpit Commentary*, <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/numbers/27-21.htm>.

quite overpowered and overshadowed the ecclesiastical, but this does not seem to have been so intended, or to have been the case in Eleazar's lifetime.¹³⁷

In Joshua's new role, Eleazar would consult the Urim and the Thummin; the Lord will reveal through the Urim and the Thummin what the children of Israel is to do; Eleazar will report that back to Joshua; and Joshua will report it to the people of God. But when you look at Moses's time in leadership, it was a different method.

This is key to me because it says that how much things have shifted from the time of Moses' season as leader to the new season that was about to begin for Joshua. This whole verse stresses the unique and close communion that Moses had with the Lord. Moses spoke to the Lord, the Lord spoke to Moses, and Moses did as the Lord commanded. It was a picture of communion with God.

Raymond Brown asserts that Eleazar was not allowed to be a despotic or dictatorial colleague. He was to seek God's mind by enquiring of the Urim. Joshua was to stand before Eleazar, and Eleazar was to stand before the LORD. Neither was free to pursue his own will. The Urim and Thummim were probably two flat stones, colored differently on each side and kept in a pocket in the high priest's breastplate.¹⁴ They were used by the high priest to cast lots to determine what God's mind might be on issues requiring a decision. It is the Holy Spirit's work to encourage, strengthen and preserve our cooperation and to lead us into a clear awareness of God's will.¹⁵

¹³ Raymond Brown, *The Message of Numbers: Journey to the Promised Land*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 55.

¹⁴ Brown, *The Message of Numbers*, 55.

¹⁵ Bible Hub, "Numbers 27:21," *The Pulpit Commentary*, <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/numbers/27-21.htm>.

In verses 22-23, we see the official installation service for Joshua and the commissioning of Joshua by Moses. “Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly. Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the Lord instructed through Moses.¹⁶ This was not only a time of transition, but a time of transferring of authority and power from Moses to Joshua. Moses obeyed the Lord and laid hands-on Joshua as a symbol of the baton being passed from him to Joshua.

David Guzik proffers that this public presentation in verses 22-23 and laying of hands-on Joshua was important. It let the whole nation know that Joshua was now the leader, and the nation should expect to follow him. Numbers 27:15-23 is a perfect picture of what healthy transition should look like in the life of the church.¹⁷

Synthesis

When comparing this Numbers text and looking at my present ministry context and my journey, one common theme keeps weaving in and out of both settings: transition and planning. There are very few things in life that happen without going through some type of transition and needing a plan after that transition occurs and takes place. At the very beginning of this paper, I referenced the life of Moses and Joshua as we see the commissioning of Joshua to succeed Moses as the new leader of Israel.

¹⁶ Bible Gateway, “Numbers 27:22-32,” <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=numbers+27%3A22-23&version=NIV>.

¹⁷ D. Guzik, “Numbers 27 – Laws of Inheritance and the Next Leader,” Enduring Word Commentary, <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/numbers-27/>.

The transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua presents one of the best examples of developing leadership and handing over leadership to those who we develop. Numbers 27 gives us a rubric and guide for effective leadership and ministry after major transitions. Looking at my present context, so much of Macedonia's growth and failures have rested tremendously on how they handled and navigated transitions in the church's life. When reviewing the full picture and context, Macedonia does weekend worship well, so some view that ministry is church attendance and not outreach and community involvement.

One of the things that Macedonia does not do well is using that same excitement and vision statement they quote at the beginning of a new year and turning it into a reality. Most of the tension and friction I feel between the church's past predecessors has rested heavily on leadership abilities and not preaching prowess.

Macedonia is known for having great singing, good preaching, and a great time, but beyond Sunday morning, there is a disconnect between excitement and execution. The synergy between Macedonia and both Great Faith and New Direction is mind-blowing and unnerving to me. All three churches are great on high church but not good on the ministry leadership follow through after the benediction. I believe that effective change happens when effective leadership is at the helm.

Unfortunately, all three churches lacked the strong administrative ministry leadership needed to propel the church and ministry to the next level. Before my arrival, all three churches had no clear or defined process on the roadmap to see the vision come to fruition beyond a worship or fellowship initiative. All three churches had great preachers before me but were not as effective in moving from membership to

discipleship. All three churches, in my opinion, were in transition upon arrival and had experienced some walls being destroyed or torn down in some way.

I believe Numbers 27 gives us a biblical model and clear process for healthy transition. The leadership transfer from Moses to Joshua provides a noteworthy guide on how to prepare the next season and set of leaders to lead beyond the present leadership. My goal would be to develop a project using some principles and processes from Moses and Joshua to address the importance of prior planning so that transition happens organically and not amid strife, bitterness, and hurt feelings.

Conclusion

When most people hear the word transition, they immediately become concerned because transition represents change. But change is not always a bad thing. Change can be good if it is handled correctly. Every Christian knows that the Bible is full of transition.

All churches and ministry leaders will find themselves in some type of transition from time to time. The reality that every pastor, minister, or ministry leader is in their role for a season is supported by the fact that no one and nothing is permanent under the sun.

Transition will happen and it can be challenging and difficult for everyone involved in it. However, it is also important to point out that transition does not discriminate, and it often comes without warning or a gentle head up. The pandemic has put all churches and their leaders in transition. I believe that long after the COVID-19 pandemic has ceased, there will be plenty of lasting and long-term effects on the church.

Even as I am writing this conclusion, I am also responding to an email from a pastoral colleague who has just resigned from his church due to the weight and demand of leading and serving people in a pandemic. I believe this will be happening more and more if we do not develop a process and system for developing effective leaders in the church and not putting all the weight and responsibility solely on the pastor.

Although Macedonia is a loving, caring, and compassionate church, some weight distribution issues need to be worked out and redistributed so that the church does not become a revolving door for transition. Macedonia has great potential, and the opportunities for continued growth are endless. Still, if there is not a process for developing effective leadership beyond the pastor, this can lead to even bigger issues.

After reviewing the church's analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, I am encouraged that I will be able to navigate through them with God's help and the Holy Spirit's guide. Every church has its share of challenges and issues, but Macedonia is such a tremendous and significant church in love. It has a heart for God and its people. We are mega in my eyes, not in terms of membership, but about the ministry we are now providing for the membership and community. My goal and aim for my doctoral project are to develop a leadership guide for not only incoming pastors but for also for incoming ministry leaders who will be assuming new leadership positions in the church. I will develop this guide using the biblical principles outlined in my selected text of Numbers 27:15-23.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Leadership transitions, as a subject of theory and practice, are difficult, but it is possible to get them right. Transition will happen, which is why you need a plan. In most congregations and ministry settings, there is no succession plan or guide for the next leader coming into the new role. This has been the case for the last two congregations that I have served as pastor. Every congregation I have served has had a pulpit search committee to select and call a pastor, but there has been no guide or plan for what to do after you have been selected to lead. This does not have to be the case when there is a clear biblical recorded plan for healthy transitions.

If we know that transition in leadership will change at some point in life in the future, why not plan for it the way the scriptures have taught us to do so. Not only is the Bible full of examples from the Old Testament to the New Testament on what healthy transitions look like, the world is also full of examples of leadership transition. Leadership transition is not only biblical, but also logical as well. Churches are dying not because of lack of anointing, lack of people, lack of resources, but a lack of proper planning. I am a firm believer that in life, nothing just happens spontaneously. In life, ministry, and leadership, you need a plan because transition will happen.

The Bible is full of examples from the Old Testament to the New Testament on what healthy transitions look like in the life of the church. Although each of them comes

with a different set of scenarios and circumstances, the bottom line is there was a time of transition when leadership changed hands and there was a season of succession.

This passage in the Book of Numbers, used as the basis for my Biblical Foundations speaks directly to my project of preparing congregations and leaders for what's next after your season of leadership through succession planning. In my historical foundations chapter, I focused on the historical piece of succession planning. This paper will look at 1) the importance of succession planning, 2) define succession planning and its history, 3) the individuals most known for succession planning, 4) the factors that make succession planning work, 5) the factors that make succession planning difficult, and 6) the present-day examples where succession planning has worked well within an organization.

The Importance of Succession Planning

One of the most disruptive things that can happen to a church, business, organization, or company is the sudden need to replace a leader. Without a defined plan in place, a leader's departure can create confusion and massive risk to an organization's stability. Therefore, the need for succession planning in every organization is vital and important.¹ To be truly effective, succession plans must be created long before they are to be enacted.

Succession planning affords your church, business, or organization the time and preparation necessary to ensure a smooth leadership transition. This helps most churches

¹ Wilmington Trust, www.wilmingtontrust.com/repositories/wtc_sitecontent/PDF/The-Power-of-Planning.pdf.

and organizations survive unforeseen events within the ministry or organization. There are a lot of ways you can suddenly lose one of your company's top leaders. Death, illness, personal problems, abrupt resignation, and even arrest can leave you with an unexpected vacancy in one of your most important positions. You cannot plan for an emergency, but you can prepare for it.

Without a succession plan, you will have to scramble to keep the business running smoothly. But with a succession plan, you will have a strategy in place for filling and backfilling even the most important leadership roles in your company. This can be the difference between whether you keep your company afloat during trying times. Succession planning is also important because it forces you to take the time to think about your church or organization's future. Who among your staff do you think can rise to fill a top leadership position? How will you bring them along? If you do not have anyone who can be trained to take on various leadership roles, do you have a hiring problem or a leadership development problem? Do you need to make changes?

These questions – and many others – will come up during succession planning. Developing answers will not just help you with future successions, it will help you set a smart course for your churches or organization's future. Finally, succession planning is important because it sends a positive message to those in your church, ministry, or organization. It lets them know that the organization is committed to stability and the overall success of the organization.

Succession Planning Defined

Succession planning is a process by which individuals are scanned to pass on the leadership role within a company. The process ensures that business continues to operate efficiently without the presence of people who were holding key positions as they must have retired, resigned, etc.

Many also define succession planning as “The future-focused practice of identifying the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform certain functions and then developing a plan to prepare multiple individuals to potentially perform those functions.”² In other words, it is an overall corporate business strategy focused on seamless client delivery and creative content that establishes an organization as an expert in all functional areas of its business.

The concept of succession planning has also been defined as “a deliberate and systematic effort by an organization to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement.”³ A succession planning process is most effective when it is a “systematic effort that is deliberately planned and driven by a written, organization-wide statement of purpose and a policy”⁴

² W. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning* (New York, NY: American Management Association, 2001), 29, <https://thuvienso.dau.edu.vn:88/bitstream/DHKTDN/6416/1/Effective%20succession%20planning%2C%203rd%20edition.5982.pdf>.

³ W. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning* (New York, NY: American Management Association, 2001), 29, <https://thuvienso.dau.edu.vn:88/bitstream/DHKTDN/6416/1/Effective%20succession%20planning%2C%203rd%20edition.5982.pdf>.

⁴ W. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning* (New York, NY: American Management Association, 2001), 29, <https://thuvienso.dau.edu.vn:88/bitstream/DHKTDN/6416/1/Effective%20succession%20planning%2C%203rd%20edition.5982.pdf>.

As it relates to church and ministry, succession is about leadership reproduction. In far too many cases, we have allowed our thinking to shift into leadership placement over leadership development. Our number one job as leaders is to reproduce ourselves, not replace ourselves. When we focus on replacement, we not only dismiss the responsibility we are given as church leaders, but we also settle for warm bodies instead of weekly volunteers.⁵

In recent years, we have gotten better at talking about succession, but often succession only refers to senior leadership within a leadership pipeline and is rarely more than a dream with few details and no deadlines. What some would call succession planning is just replacement planning. Replacement planning looks more like risk management and is often a folder to pull out if a key leader suffers a medical emergency or experiences a moral failure that immediately removes the individual from leadership. True succession planning is quite different.⁶

Succession planning focuses on leadership reproduction over leadership replacement and leads with a proactive posture, not a reactive one. Succession planning also provides continuity of leadership by cultivating leaders within the church or organization's leadership pipeline. Succession is not only concerned with the top levels of leadership or the key leaders of the organization but is a long-term investment strategy in the organization's most valuable resource: its people.⁷

⁵ Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, *Better Learning Through Structured Teaching* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2014), 3.

⁶ Fisher and Frey, *Better Learning Through Structured Teaching*, 3.

⁷ Michael Wise, "A Biblical Model for Leadership Succession," *National Association of Evangelicals Magazine*, February 6, 2020.

From the outset of Jesus' public ministry, he associated with himself twelve apprentices (disciples). He chose them specifically for the purpose of succession. Many others also came to follow Jesus, and we know from scripture that over 500 followers witnessed his resurrection in Jerusalem (1 Cor 15). All of them would go on to tell of their time with Jesus and spread his teaching and declare the kingdom. But the twelve were a special subgroup, and Jesus especially poured himself into their lives so that they could become the people they would need to be. Herein lies a principle: ideally, a good leader personally prepares his successors.

Jesus did more than let the disciples learn by observing him and walking with him and talking with him privately without the public riddles. Jesus gave them the very Spirit by whom his own public ministry was empowered. He gave them the Holy Spirit, called in the New Testament the "Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9). And Jesus let them gain some experience in doing what he did, a bit at a time.⁸ He sent them out to heal, confront evil and proclaim the kingdom, then he debriefed them (Luke 9–10). But as Calvary loomed, Jesus specifically addressed with them the issue of succession. We find two passages in the Gospel of John that highlights this. The first passage, John 14:8–20, is set on the night when Jesus was betrayed and arrested. He engages in a very intimate, loving, yet wistful discussion with these disciples with whom he has shared his earthly life these last three years. Philip asks him a question that demonstrates that he and the others still do not really understand Jesus. Jesus directs their attention to the mighty deeds that he has done as evidence of his status as God's Son. Then he says something very important: "He who

⁸ Michael Wise, "A Biblical Model for Leadership Succession," *National Association of Evangelicals Magazine*, February 6, 2020.

believes in me will do the mighty deeds I do — and he will do greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (14:12). He further promises a new power in prayer because his successors will now pray in Jesus’ name.

Then Jesus explains how these things will become possible. “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he might be with you to the end of the age: the Spirit of Truth.” This presence is what will make succession possible. Jesus further says that he will not leave his disciples as orphans but will come to them and be with them always. This reality, too, will be by the Comforter (14:20). Jesus is explicitly describing how succession will work.⁹

Herein lies another principle for Christian organizations: proper succession, a succession that will live and requires the Spirit of Jesus. Succession planning is never ours alone. Christian organizations are themselves successors to Jesus. In a very real sense, they will not be orphaned as the current leader departs, for that person was never truly the leader. Jesus was and is, and he will be present.

Succession Planning History and Contributors

Succession planning was introduced by Henri Fayol (1918) who believed that if the succession plans were interrupted, the organization would not be ready for the necessary transition¹⁰ In 1916, Henri Fayol published the book *Administration*

⁹ Michael Wise, “A Biblical Model for Leadership Succession,” National Association of Evangelicals Magazine, February 6, 2020.

¹⁰ V. R. Diya and M. Mansor, “Review of History Succession Planning: Replacement, Talent Management and Workforce Planning,” *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 9, no. 9 (2019): 1298-1303.

Industrielle et Generale, (which is titled in English, *General and Industrial Management*), in which he developed fourteen principles related to administration.

In the book Fayol states that the management of an organization has a responsibility to ensure the long-term stability of the workforce and if that stability is threatened, then important positions in the organization will be filled by unprepared workers.

Furthermore, Fayol states that the strength of an organization depends on its employees and that when workers become more skilled and ready, the organization will reap the benefits. Next, the most popular scholar in the field of succession planning was William J. Rothwell.

William J. Rothwell asserts that organizations that do not have formal succession planning face issues such as important positions are not filled in the required time, key vacancies take place, key positions are filled with leaders outside the organization, there is always a turnaround for key positions, there is no provision of a replacement for potential leaders, a lack of skills among the successors in the organization, and no retention of talent in the organization.¹¹

According to Rothwell these problems are problems faced by organizations due to the absence of succession planning. Succession planning started to be incorporated as part of an organization core strategy in the early 1970s. Renowned author of *Executive Continuity*, Walter Mahler, is credited with shaping the idea behind succession planning for corporates. Whilst the definition of succession planning has expanded through the

¹¹ Jason Gordon, "Succession Planning Explained," The Business Professor, September 26, 2021, https://thebusinessprofessor.com/en_US/estate-law/succession-planning-definition.

years, the fundamental idea remains the same; the right person with the right skills is placed in the right job at the right time. From the days of Henri Fayol to the wide research of William J. Rothwell and many more, succession planning has now become a core component of long-lasting organizations.¹²

Myths About Succession Planning

There are many myths and misconceptions about succession planning, whether it is the church, the business sector, or a family business. Succession planning oftentimes does not happen because of the mixed notions surrounding it. One of the myths about succession planning is succession is tomorrow's problem. Putting the subject on the back burner, believing we do not need to worry about it because there are years to plan for it, is dangerous.¹³

The problem with this logic is that you risk the unexpected catching up with you; in extreme cases, the key leader or businessperson may take ill or pass away. Most churches, businesses, and family enterprises are owner-managed and extremely hands-on dealing with the day-to-day challenges of the business. It is vital to always be considering the "what if" question and scenarios. Another myth surrounding succession planning is about appointing the next leader. Succession is not about passing the business to one person but considering holistic future planning and protection. It is vital to consider ownership, business, individual, family and wealth needs and wants.

¹² Jason Gordon, "Succession Planning Explained," The Business Professor, September 26, 2021, https://thebusinessprofessor.com/en_US/estate-law/succession-planning-definition.

¹³ Jason Gordon, "Succession Planning Explained," The Business Professor, September 26, 2021, https://thebusinessprofessor.com/en_US/estate-law/succession-planning-definition.

Succession and transitioning are about having a developing strategy to carefully evolve the roles played for new and existing people at all levels of the organization.

Successful processes ensure that there is room for the present generation as well as the future. Succession is a living, breathing process of transferring knowledge, experience, values, and much more — not just to a newer generation but also up to the incumbent generation. We should never stop learning and it is not about creating a one-off plan.

The final myth about succession planning is it is something I can do when I am ready to do it. It is rare that one person decides on how the future will be, especially when that person will not be part of it. This rarely works well. It is very much an inclusive process that should involve all those that influence and are influenced by business and future decisions. It is vital to have buy-in from everyone or at least involve them in the process as this is a huge opportunity to consider ideas you had not thought of and to share the burden and responsibility. This approach allows relationships to be strengthened rather than undermined and opportunities to be seized.

Best Practices for Succession Planning

According to the Genevieve Roberts of the Gallagher group, the best practices to ensure a successful and effective succession planning process is starting with the end in mind. Roberts states that you need to take the time to clearly understand what you will be looking for in terms of roles to fill, requirements for those roles, and what is important for

success at your company.¹⁴ Identifying the core competencies, skills, abilities, and other required criteria for someone to be successful at your company in a specific role is needful. As you take this step, ensure that you are as inclusive as possible and interview your strongest incumbents and their bosses for input. The output can include leadership competency models and updated job descriptions, as well as a list of those roles to be included in the process.¹⁵

Roberts also asserts that being clear about the roles and who will be involved in the process is key to a smooth transition. As soon you start talking about successions planning, people start to get nervous because they feel their careers are now in someone else's hands. So, up front, one should identify and communicate the positions and the people involved in the process. Will it include all supervisory roles? Senior leadership? Or only executive roles? By narrowing the focus, you can help to alleviate your team member's guessing and wondering about their future with the organization.¹⁶

Roberts also states the importance of engaging stakeholders, particularly senior leadership, is very critical. You should conduct interviews with them, invite them to take surveys and to provide input, and attend focus groups.¹⁷ Involving key stakeholders will

¹⁴ Genevie Roberts, "Transitioning from succession planning to talent management," Gallagher Group, <https://www.ajg.com/us/news-and-insights/2019/06/transitioning-from-succession-planning-to-talent-management/>.

¹⁵ Genevie Roberts, "Transitioning from succession planning to talent management," Gallagher Group, <https://www.ajg.com/us/news-and-insights/2019/06/transitioning-from-succession-planning-to-talent-management/>.

¹⁶ Genevie Roberts, "Transitioning from succession planning to talent management," Gallagher Group, <https://www.ajg.com/us/news-and-insights/2019/06/transitioning-from-succession-planning-to-talent-management/>.

¹⁷ Genevie Roberts, "Transitioning from succession planning to talent management," Gallagher Group, <https://www.ajg.com/us/news-and-insights/2019/06/transitioning-from-succession-planning-to-talent-management/>.

not only help you get buy-in for every step of the process but also you will receive some ideas about how to make it a better experience and process for everyone.¹⁸ One of the other best practices for succession planning is being able to look ahead a few years. Now this is not to say that you do not need a plan if executives in critical roles get “hit by a bus.” However, you also need to focus on longer term succession planning, which means you need to forecast out your workforce needs. An important step to take with the forecasting is to identify “mobilization factors” for each individual and level of management under consideration. And finally, the most important best practice for succession planning is communication.¹⁹

Communicating your plans to give them increased responsibility will make them feel appreciated. Communicating openly shows employees that the organization practices transparency, which is something valued greatly by the next generation of leaders. Roberts recommends that the succession planning takes place “wide open” rather than behind closed doors primarily because transparency builds trust.²⁰

It is important to involve all stakeholders along the way and encourage openness in one-on-one conversations with your employees. Lisa Oddis states we should tell

¹⁸ Genevie Roberts, “Transitioning from succession planning to talent management,” Gallagher Group, <https://www.ajg.com/us/news-and-insights/2019/06/transitioning-from-succession-planning-to-talent-management/>.

¹⁹ Lisa Oddis, “The Importance of Communication in Succession Planning,” *Executive Business Network*, March 17, 2015.

²⁰ Genevie Roberts, “Transitioning from succession planning to talent management,” Gallagher Group, <https://www.ajg.com/us/news-and-insights/2019/06/transitioning-from-succession-planning-to-talent-management/>.

people where they are and speak to realistic career goals, share career path opportunities, and most importantly celebrate successes and promotions.²¹

It is not a label that you are giving someone; rather it is an opportunity to engage in a dialogue that will encourage those who have high potential to stay and those with more opportunities to work more purposefully toward reaching their goals.²²

Barriers for Succession Planning

When you are dealing with succession planning, you are bound to face at least some resistance to the idea of succession planning or changes to your established process. To prepare your organization for change, be aware of what your succession planning team might face as you develop a new process. One of the first barriers to successful succession planning and transition is fear of commitment. Some leaders may resist succession planning because it creates a sense of expectation that certain people are guaranteed certain positions. They may worry that they are creating a contract situation. This barrier is a common one and can be awkward to move through; straight talk without emotional attachment is the antidote.²³

The second barrier of succession planning is being reluctant to allocate resources to make sure the transition is successful. Succession planning may get short shrift from

²¹ Lisa Oddis, “The Importance of Communication in Succession Planning,” *Executive Benefits Network*, March 17, 2015.

²² Lisa Oddis, “The Importance of Communication in Succession Planning,” *Executive Benefits Network*, March 17, 2015.

²³ Seymour Adler and Jim Donohue, “Why Succession Planning Can’t Wait: Four Steps for Building a Leadership Pipeline,” *Kincentric*, January 2020, <https://www.kincentric.com/insights/why-succession-planning-cant-wait#:~:text=The%20risks%20of%20not%20making,in%20public%20or%20private%20reputation.>

those who set the budget, but it is vital that the succession planning team have the resources – time, money, and technology – to do the work necessary to build a strong plan. Whether it is the organization’s board or leadership team, buy-in from the top is key to recognizing succession planning as a priority.

The third barrier of succession planning is the fear of the unknown. Behind succession planning discussions is the acknowledgment that unexpected things can happen to people, which taps into an almost universal fear of talking about disaster and the unknown. Top leaders may resist talking about their successors as it forces them to consider what they may do with retirement and beyond. It can be scary and threatening.²⁴

Adler and Donohue suggest that the best way to navigate through those seasons is to avoid talking about “worst-case scenarios” and keep the discussion as neutral as possible while focusing on the process.²⁵ Although there are more barriers than those I listed, it is important not to let any barriers keep your church or organization from embracing the power of succession planning.

Present Day Case Study

When we think about succession planning and leadership transitions done well, we can point to businesses like family restaurants, farms, funeral homes, and even

²⁴ Seymour Adler and Jim Donohue, “Why Succession Planning Can’t Wait: Four Steps for Building a Leadership Pipeline, *Kincentric*, January 2020, <https://www.kincentric.com/insights/why-succession-planning-cant-wait#:~:text=The%20risks%20of%20not%20making,in%20public%20or%20private%20reputation.>

²⁵ Seymour Adler and Jim Donohue, “Why Succession Planning Can’t Wait: Four Steps for Building a Leadership Pipeline, *Kincentric*, January 2020, <https://www.kincentric.com/insights/why-succession-planning-cant-wait#:~:text=The%20risks%20of%20not%20making,in%20public%20or%20private%20reputation.>

churches or religious entities that have kept the day-to-day functions in the family. But the biggest case study and example of succession planning done extremely well has got to be the case of Apple and their transition from Steve Jobs to Tim Cook. If Apple has taught us anything over the last years, it is that transition happens to even the best of us and it happens unexpectedly, but that does not mean that it cannot be done and executed with excellence.

On August 24, 2011, Apple, Inc. announced that Steve Jobs, its iconic co-founder, was resigning from his CEO role and assuming the chairmanship due to health challenges. Tim Cook, Apple's head of operations, became the new CEO. Steve Jobs and Tim Cook gave us a modern-day example of what healthy transition and succession should look like for all of us when it came to passing the baton to the next generation. This plan of succession and transition did not happen suddenly or overnight; rather, it took time, careful planning, and intentionality about the future success of a company. Carmine Gallo, who followed Jobs' career closely over the years, and penned two popular books, *The Innovation Secrets of Steve Jobs* and *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs*, listed five lessons from Steve Jobs' succession at Apple.

The first lesson Steve Jobs listed for healthy succession was focusing on the customer, client, user experience. Gallo stated, "Above everything else, Steve Jobs really understands his customer."²⁶ Jobs displayed the same mentality in executing his departure from Apple, enforcing his trademark secrecy and weathering anger from the investment

²⁶ Robert Strohmeier, "5 Succession Planning Lessons From Steve Job," Information Week, <https://www.informationweek.com/government/5-succession-planning-lessons-from-steve-jobs>. Strohmeier source for his work is Carmine Gallo, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Job* (Nashville, TN: McGraw Hill, April 22, 2014).

community and Apple customers over his refusal to disclose many details about his health condition. Yet, he consistently pursued his vision of user experience at Apple until the moment of his resignation. Ultimately, said Gallo, that deep focus on the user will be his legacy.²⁷

The second lesson Gallo stated that Jobs did well was “building a culture that transcended his leadership.” He surrounded himself with people who shared his passion for design, user experience, and excellence. Said Gallo, “He built a culture within the company that puts the user first.” Great leaders build companies, organizations, and ministries that can excel without them.²⁸

The third lesson Gallo outlines regarding Steve Jobs transition plan is transition proactively. Gallo observes that, when we look back, we see that Steve Jobs had been gradually handing off power and public exposure to other key personalities within Apple since news of his health woes first surfaced. Gallo remarked, “I noticed that, really, Tim Cook began doing a lot of presentations for new product announcements.”²⁹ Jobs began presenting the other personalities behind Apple in a more concerted way, acclimating the company, its customers, and the media to the look and feel of an Apple product launch.

²⁷ Robert Strohmeier, “5 Succession Planning Lessons From Steve Job,” Information Week, <https://www.informationweek.com/government/5-succession-planning-lessons-from-steve-jobs>. Strohmeier source for his work is Carmine Gallo, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Job* (Nashville, TN: McGraw Hill, April 22, 2014).

²⁸ Robert Strohmeier, “5 Succession Planning Lessons From Steve Job,” Information Week, <https://www.informationweek.com/government/5-succession-planning-lessons-from-steve-jobs>. Strohmeier source for his work is Carmine Gallo, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Job* (Nashville, TN: McGraw Hill, April 22, 2014).

²⁹ Robert Strohmeier, “5 Succession Planning Lessons From Steve Job,” Information Week, <https://www.informationweek.com/government/5-succession-planning-lessons-from-steve-jobs>. Strohmeier source for his work is Carmine Gallo, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Job* (Nashville, TN: McGraw Hill, April 22, 2014).

Gallo is confident that Apple's new leaders now have ample preparation to lead the company forward.

The final lesson Gallo highlights in the Jobs to Cook succession model is "Choose people who can take over your duties, not your personality."³⁰ In 2011, it was hard to imagine anyone but Steve Jobs leading Apple, but that perception likely does not match reality, according to Gallo. One of the things Steve Jobs did well in his succession plan is assemble a team that could lead the company in a way consistent with his vision and beyond his time with the company.³¹

Conclusion

This paper has been centered mostly on the history of succession planning, those who were considered the founding fathers of it, those factors that make it work, those barriers that prevent it from being done well and present-day people and companies who have seen it through to the other side. As I stated in my introduction, one of the things that stops most churches, businesses, and companies dead in their tracks is having no place for the season the current leader is no longer in place.

All churches and ministry leaders will find themselves in some type of transition from time to time. Transition will happen and it can be challenging and difficult for

³⁰ Robert Strohmeier, "5 Succession Planning Lessons From Steve Job," Information Week, <https://www.informationweek.com/government/5-succession-planning-lessons-from-steve-jobs>. Strohmeier source for his work is Carmine Gallo, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Job* (Nashville, TN: McGraw Hill, April 22, 2014).

³¹ Robert Strohmeier, "5 Succession Planning Lessons From Steve Job," Information Week, <https://www.informationweek.com/government/5-succession-planning-lessons-from-steve-jobs>. Strohmeier source for his work is Carmine Gallo, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Job* (Nashville, TN: McGraw Hill, April 22, 2014).

everyone involved in it, but transition does not have to hinder a ministry from moving forward. I personally believe that can only happen when there is a succession plan in place and guidelines to follow that are clear, concise, and bathed in prayer.

As it relates to my context and ministry, I believe that there several models outside of the church that point to rubrics for succession planning such as family farms, funeral homes, family restaurants, and even churches that have executed succession planning well.

Every day, there are hundreds of hundreds of ministry leaders and pastors resigning from their roles and leadership positions, and I believe the defining moment for those left behind is what do we do next to keep the ball in motion. Therefore, developing systems and processes for developing effective leaders in the church while that person is in leadership to give them a preview and snapshot of what their next season will eventually be as it relates to leadership.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Life is filled with swift transition and the church is not excluded from this process and season. If the church is going to continue to thrive and grow, there must be a process for transition and succession planning, especially in the African American church context. This idea of transition and succession planning for Macedonia Baptist Church was created from my own personal and ministerial experiences. Every institution with designated leadership has been, is, or will be confronted with seasons of transitions. This is my experience, and with the help of God, the research and data conducted in this project will help develop a rubric and guide for what a healthy transition looks like among pastors and those in ministry leadership. The African American church community faces a critical need in relation to pastoral succession which many congregations are simply not prepared for, let alone, talked about prior to the transition happening in the life of the church.

The word “theology” comes from two Greek words that combined mean “the study of God.” Christian theology is simply an attempt to understand God as He is revealed in the Bible. Theology is a system of the study of God and all that pertains to

Him which includes the existence and nature of God.¹ Theology is never done in a vacuum. It influences and is influenced by its context. In this theological foundation paper, I will discuss the undergirding of numerous types of theological disciplines that can aid pastors and ministry leaders with passing the baton as it relates to succession planning and transition.

The aim of my doctoral project is to investigate the role of the pastor and ministry leader as they face and deal with new challenges for church growth and church continuation. The new challenge for today's churches will not be lack of preaching, worship, or limited buildings; rather, it will be the lack of development for future leaders before transition happens in leadership.

All churches and their leaders will find themselves in some transition from time to time. Transition is difficult for everyone involved in it. However, it is also important to point out that it is the leader's responsibility to train, equip, and educate the next group of leaders for leadership transition while still actively serving in leadership. If leaders in the church are properly training and developing prior to a leadership vacancy, it gives the church a better chance at being more effective in building up the Body of Christ. Previous research has shown that churches have a leadership pothole because of the lack of leadership development and transition utilizing a proactive approach. Leadership development and succession planning is essential to the church's continuation of the church.

¹ Bible.org, "Theology: The Doctrine of God," <https://bible.org/seriespage/50-theology-doctrine-god>.

In this paper, I have presented the Biblical Foundations to provide insight through succession planning and transition. The specific theological fields I will address are practical theology, process theology, ecclesiology, and pneumatology. These theological focuses will address the subject matter and provide insight on how these disciplines can help facilitate change and support healthy transition in the context setting of Macedonia Baptist Church. Practical theology, as its name implies, is the study of theology in a way that is intended to make it useful or applicable. Process theology is a theological approach that understands ultimate reality in terms of a dynamic process of becoming and ongoing change. Ecclesiology is the study of the church and how the church must be a place that galvanizes and inspires, not ostracizes. Pneumatology is the branch of theology that deals with the essence and role of the Holy Spirit. Throughout this paper, the foundational concept of change will be seen and discussed throughout these theological disciplines.

Practical Theology

Practical theology, according to Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, is the theology that deals with the activity of believers seeking to sustain a life of reflective faith in the everyday, “a method or way of analyzing theology in practice used by religious leaders and by teachers and students across the theological curriculum, a curriculum area in theological education focused on ministerial practice and subspecialties, and finally an academic discipline.”²

² Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, “Introduction: The Contributions of Practical Theology,” in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, ed. Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020), 1-20.

The goal of practical theology is to develop effective communicators of scripture who have a vision for the spiritual growth of believers, while being servant leaders. Practical theology, as its name implies, is the study of theology in a way that is intended to make it useful or applicable. Another way of saying it is that it is the study of theology so that it can be used and is relevant to everyday concerns. The main goal of practical theology is to develop effective communicators of scripture who have a vision for the spiritual growth of believers while being servant leaders.³

Some theologians believe and assert that, “The emphasis of Practical Theology is not simply to contemplate or comprehend theological doctrines but to move beyond that to applying those doctrines in everyday Christian life so that we contribute to the world’s becoming what God intends it to be.”⁴

Phyllis Sheppard states in Jennifer Baldwin’s book, *Sensing Sacred: Exploring the Human Senses in Practical Theology and Pastoral Care*, that “we must take into consideration the cultural dynamics of practical theology and the importance of Self, Culture and Others in Womanist Practical Theology”.⁵

Sheppard points out and states that the self is always contextualized culturally, while it is also simultaneously a psychic experience. This is an element to the discourse on self that a womanist contribution to psychoanalytic self-psychology makes. The implication is that the self cannot be understood outside its texts and contextual focus

³ Gotquestions.org, “What is Practical Theology,” <https://www.gotquestions.org/practical-theology.html>.

⁴ Gotquestions.org, “What is Practical Theology,” <https://www.gotquestions.org/practical-theology.html>.

⁵ Jennifer Baldwin, ed., *Sensing Sacred: Exploring the Human Senses in Practical Theology and Pastoral Care*. Studies in Body and Religion (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 7-18.

that either support or impede the formation of the self. Sheppard goes on to state that a womanist-informed self-psychology recenters the important location of the cultural and gendered embodiment and the social. This recentering does not dismiss the familial, but rather suggests that the familial context is always in relationship to the broader view of practical theology.⁶

James Poling states in his book, *Methods of Practical Theology for Congregations and Church Leaders*, that every Christian who seriously tries to practice her or his faith is doing practical theology. Being a Christian means trying to live one's life according to one's best understanding of what the Bible teaches about what God wants us to do and find appropriate ways to live this faith in the world. We try to match our everyday lives with what God wants. Teachers are called by the church to train church leaders for their tasks as practical theologians. Scholars are called by the church with responsibility for research on the issues facing the church and development of practical theology as an academic theological discipline.⁷

Poling continues to push the ball forward by posing the following questions: "What are the appropriate methods for engaging in practical theology in local congregations? How are these methods shaped by the Scripture and traditions of the church and the situation in which we find ourselves in the world?"⁸ I believe each of those questions are vital and key because practical theology is not only simply a study

⁶ Phyllis Sheppard, *Self, Culture and Others in Womanist Practical Theology* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 117.

⁷ James Newton Poling, "Methods of Practical Theology for Congregations and Church Leaders," *Rethinking Faith: A Constructive Practical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: 1517 Media, 2011), 137-48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt22nm6bc.14>.

⁸ Poling, "Methods of Practical Theology for Congregations and Church Leaders," 137-48.

of Christian practices, but it also differentiates between theological knowledge and learning and the actual experience and needs of Christian communities. Practical theology has often sought to address a perceived disconnection between theology as an academic discipline on the one hand and the practical life of the church on the other. This area of theology often focuses on pastoral ministry students, missionaries, Christian education directors, and other vocational ministry roles in Christian colleges and seminaries. Some consider practical theology to simply be a more technical name for the doctrine of the Christian life. Its emphasis is on how all the teaching of scripture should affect the way we live today in this present world. The emphasis of practical theology is not simply to contemplate or comprehend theological doctrines but to move beyond that to applying those doctrines in everyday Christian life so that we contribute to the world's becoming what God intends it to be.

Although Friedrich Schleiermacher is considered the founding father of practical theology as one of the disciplines of theological studies, John Wesley is the theologian that stands out to me as the theologian that really drove the idea home for me in terms of practical theology. Wesley referred often to practical theology as “practical divinity” because he felt you could not separate the “divine” and the “process.”

Wesley's teaching on practical theology asserted the religious value of experience and shifted the core notion of belief away from an act of intellectual agency

towards something more intuitive and experiential — away from “assent” and toward “faith.”⁹

Emma Cunha asserts that John Wesley saw practical theology as participatory, so that the truths of Scripture are actualized in practice and in community and not just an individual intellectual exercise. Cunha went on to say that Wesley emphasized the doctrines of sin and salvation in his study and preaching by addressing how you become a Christian and how you remain a Christian. Wesley is described as being a “conjunctive” theologian, which means he has a “both-and” approach as compared to an “either-or” approach to theological ideas. He is looking for balance. Free grace is the work of God alone. Wesley describes cooperant grace as, “God works; therefore, you can work; God works; therefore, you must work.”¹⁰ Grace is the normative context of the moral law of God. Wesley teaches that we relate to God by both free grace and cooperant grace.

The premise behind practical theology programs is that future Christian leaders need to be equipped not only with theological knowledge but also with the necessary professional skills to minister effectively in the modern world.¹¹ Pastor Brandon Thomas Crowley of the Myrtle Baptist Church in Boston, Massachusetts, defines Practical Theology as an activity of people of faith and an academic method used by scholars as a critical theological approach to understanding religious practices,

⁹ Emma Salgård Cunha, *John Wesley, Practical Divinity and the Defence of Literature*, First ed., Routledge, 2017, <https://doi-org.dtl.idm.oclc.org/10.4324/9780203729694>.

¹⁰ Kenneth J. Collins, “The Method of John Wesley’s Practical Theology Reconsidered,” *Wesley and Methodist Studies* 9, no. 2 (2017): 101-22, doi:10.5325/weslmethstud.9.2.0101.

¹¹ Brandon Thomas Crowley, “How I define Practical Theolog,” <https://www.brandoncrowley.com/new-blog/2018/1/6/how-i-define-practical-theology>.

traditions, and experiences. Crowley also asserts that practical theology explores the interrelationship between practice and theory from a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective.

It is a process of examining, recognizing, describing, analyzing, evaluating, and questioning the theological practices of religious communities, leaders, believers, traditions, and liturgies. Practical theology is a form of theology that leans heavily on sociological methodology while capturing and discovering the questions that practical theology brings to classical theology. Practical theology concentrates on investigating, appreciating, visualizing, understanding, illuminating, and even critiquing the current social, cultural, and ecclesial practices of communities which are nestled within social contexts.

In my development of this working definition, I draw on Don Browning. According to Browning, practical theology draws upon several complementary disciplines. These disciplines function within various practical theological methods. Browning states that practical theology carefully describes the individual and social realities of a community, and it defines the worldview within which the inner core of practical reason works.¹²

According to Madeline Pena, an English Puritan named Richard Baxter (1615-1691) is often given the credit of first introducing practical theology due to his writing of a large, four-volume book titled *A Christian Directory of Practical Theology*. This book was very popular and influential during its time, covering a wide range of social

¹² Madeline Pena, "Practical Theology: Definition, Viewpoints, Why It Matters," Just Disciple, <https://justdisciple.com/practical-theology/>.

and practical issues. Baxter divided practical theology into four major parts: Christian Ethics, Christian Economics, Christian Ecclesiastics and Christian Politics. Pena also states practical theology consists of several related sub-fields: applied theology, church growth, administration, homiletics, spiritual formation, pastoral theology, spiritual direction, spiritual theology, political theology, theology of justice and peace, and similar areas.¹³

As you can see from this short list, practical theology covers a wide range of issues, and it is very important that the church practices proper practical theology not only because, in one sense, it highlights an application of the Christian life based on the study of biblical principles but it also addresses the continuation of the church. Overall, the importance of practical theology is that one does not simply know scripture but puts it to use in their day-to-day life and Christian walk.

Process Theology

Process theology is a theology that uses processive and organismic models to explain the faith of Christians in the person of Jesus and the events and traditions that he has inspired. It is still theology in the traditional sense of “faith seeking understanding.”¹⁴ But it is different from traditional theology in that it uses the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead. Whitehead is the most notable theologian associated with process theology. Whitehead was a man of many interests and many talents. Born in

¹³ Madeline Pena, “Practical Theology: Definition, Viewpoints, Why It Matters,” Just Disciple, <https://justdisciple.com/practical-theology/>.

¹⁴ Robert B. Mellert, *What Is Process Theology?* (New York, NY: Deus Books, Paulist Press, 1975), 120.

England in 1861, he encountered the intellectual life before the deluge of scientific knowledge and the age of specialization. As a result, he was able to pursue and develop an expertise in several fields in a way that is perhaps no longer possible for anyone today. Whitehead's main big idea of process theology was the whole premise of becoming. The process of becoming is more fundamental than the being that is achieved, and thus it is more important for philosophical study.

Nicolas Rescher's essay on process theology argues that process theology is a way of thinking about change – and not only things that change – but how they change. The primary focus on process theology is not what is, but it is on what is happening at the moment.¹⁵ According to Snell, process theology should challenge institutional churches to examine how they intellectually view God and the mission of the church.¹⁶ In other words, in Christendom, there is a tremendous emphasis placed on one receiving salvation. Accepting salvation, accepting Christ, is a wonderful experience, but is there more to the Christian faith than accepting Jesus? Is it the ideology of the Christian tenets or is the Christian faith primarily spirituality?

Are people of God only concerned about the by and by, and not the social, political, and economic plight of humanity? What is our duty as Christians when we are confronted with the reality of change? Process theology thinkers' primary focus is not of what is, but on what is happening. Therefore, from the process theology standpoint,

¹⁵ Nicolas Rescher, "Process Metaphysics: An Introduction to Process Theology," University of North Carolina at Asheville, 7-8, olliasheville.com/sites/default/files/instructor.

¹⁶ Nicolas Rescher, "Process Metaphysics: An Introduction to Process Theology," University of North Carolina at Asheville, 7-8, olliasheville.com/sites/default/files/instructor.

society and religious groups should be constantly examining what is going on in the world and tailor their beliefs, traditions, and practices toward that common end.¹⁷

Process theology challenges society, institutions, churches, and humanity to examine the normal progression of change, if embraced, to think critically about alternative methods of how change is inevitable, and society should be prepared to change and adjust to change in an effective manner. Even though churches and those in the congregation are fully aware of the reality of change, for some reason, there seems to be very little preparation to adjust to the demands of change in society.¹⁸

Process theology focuses on what is happening in society and places a demand on society to adjust for survival. In the church there is a slow response to change, whether the change requires a social, political, or organizational adjustment. The element of change is the elephant in the room.

Process theology advocates for change to occur in organizations, institutions, and religious establishments; in this context, a moment of self-reflection must take place within the individual and institution. Self-reflection begins the critical process of exchanging ideas and concepts to make the necessary preparation for adjusting for change. Change is one of the dominant factors that motivates individuals to change.

The context needs to adopt the concept of change not as a negative connotation but welcome it as an opportunity to grow and develop by implementing a new paradigm shift that will focus its ministerial efforts on bridging the gap between the multiple

¹⁷ Madeline Pena, "Practical Theology: Definition, Viewpoints, Why It Matters," Just Disciple, <https://justdisciple.com/practical-theology/>.

¹⁸ Nicolas Rescher, "Process Metaphysics: An Introduction to Process Theology," University of North Carolina at Asheville, 7-8, <https://www.olliasheville.com/sites/default/files/instructor>.

generations in the church to create church growth and establish church sustainability in the life of the congregation. This can be achieved by utilizing a variety of theologies that follow the premise of change and that God is a constant agent of change. The reality is that change is a natural progression of life and should not be received negatively; however, it should be received with a futuristic view in mind.¹⁹

Laura Metz states that process theology or process theism was developed first by Alfred North Whitehead in the early 20th century and later by Charles Hartshorne. A core belief of these men is that the divine being is affected by temporal processes. According to this theory, God is changeable and therefore our knowledge of God must change as well. Additionally, God's own knowledge is limited, and he only estimates what will happen in the future.²⁰

Process theology theorists assert that God and mankind both draw from the same source of creativity, and God works with humans as partners in creation. For example, God creates the seeds for beautiful flowers and people plant them. The plant could not have been created without the creativity of both humans and God; thus, God is not the source of everything, in process theology. Even God used a power outside of himself to create the world. In process theology, absolute knowledge of God is unachievable. Since God is always changing, he is not the same today as he was yesterday, and he will not be the same tomorrow. Additionally, process theology thinkers assert that since God has changed since the Bible was written, constant study of the divine is necessary.

¹⁹ Nicolas Rescher, "Process Metaphysics: An Introduction to Process Theology," University of North Carolina at Asheville, 7-8, <https://www.olliasheville.com/sites/default/files/instructor>.

²⁰ Laura Metz, "What Is Process Theology?" March 19, 2023, <https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-is-process-theology.htm>.

Ecclesiology

The word ecclesiology comes from two Greek words meaning “assembly” and “word,” combining to mean “the study of the church.”²¹ The church is the assembly of believers who belong to God. Ecclesiology is crucial to understanding God’s purpose for believers in the world today. While many people may think of physical structures when they hear the word “church,” ecclesiology actually focuses on the study of the church as an entity, and on the study of people who belong to the church. This field of study is a topic of interest for some theologians and historians, especially those interested in Christianity, and it can play a role in the development of church doctrine.

What we believe about ecclesiology is very important because, in God’s economy, the church is the most important institution on earth.²² In his book, *Theology You Can Count On*, Dr. Tony Evans writes,

When we say that the church is to complete Christ’s person, let’s acknowledge that no local church fulfills this assignment perfectly. Yet each local church does have a vital role to play. In Paul’s mind, the church was not some amorphous concept or ideal with no real substance. Every local church is a visible expression of the universal church, and every believer is a visible expression of Christ in his or her world.

Ecclesiology is crucial to understanding God’s purpose for believers in the world today.

In Christian systematic theology, ecclesiology is one of the major areas of study and investigates what the Bible teaches about the church both universal (all believer in Christ) and local (local gatherings of believers in Christ). One of the key roles of ecclesiology is to answer fundamental questions about the Christian church such as what

²¹ Mary McMahon, “What Is Ecclesiology?” Wisegeek, February 23, 2023, <https://www.wise-geek.com/what-is-ecclesiology.htm>.

²² Tony Evans, *Theology You Can Count On* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2008), 367.

the function of the church is, how the church is defined in the Bible, who belongs to the church, what the Bible has to say about the administration of the church, and who the members of the church leadership are.²³

The Church Defined

The New Testament uses the Greek word *ekklesia* approximately 114 times. While some uses of the word refer to an assembly of people apart from a religious emphasis, most occurrences identify either the universal church (often spelled with an uppercase C) or local churches (local groups of Christian believers). Of special importance is the fact that a church in the Bible always refers to people, not to buildings, as many people understand the term today. In the New Testament, Christians did not *go* to church; Christians *were* the church. Many people today understand the church to be a building. This is not the biblical understanding of the church. The root meaning of “church” is not that of a building, but of people.²⁴

The Purpose of the Church

According to scripture, the purposes of the church should be: (1) teaching Biblical doctrine, (2) providing a place of fellowship for believers, (3) observing the Lord’s supper, and (4) praying. These roles and purposes are also found in Acts 2:42-47.

²³ Compelling Truth, What Is Ecclesiology? <https://www.compellingtruth.org/ecclesiology.htm>.

²⁴ Got Questions, “What Is Ecclesiology?” <https://www.gotquestions.org/ecclesiology.html>.

The Rituals of the Church

There is a huge emphasis and importance placed on baptism and the Lord's Supper. According to the Bible, Christian baptism is simply a step of obedience, a public proclamation of one's faith in Christ alone for salvation. While baptism is not required for salvation, it is an act of obedience and faith "evidence" that salvation is a reality in a person's life. The Lord's Supper is observed by all Christian traditions, though its meaning is understood differently among the various branches of Christian churches today.²⁵

Church Leadership/Church Membership

Much emphasis in ecclesiology is placed on the consideration of church leadership. The Bible teaches that church leadership consists of a plurality of elders along with a group of deacons who serve as servants of the church. But it is not contrary to this plurality of elders to have one of those elders serving in the major "pastoral" role. Some traditions insist elders should be the church's primary leaders, while others emphasize the role of deacons more (I Timothy 3, Titus 1:5-9). In addition, the role of women in church leadership receives much attention. Further, how church leaders are chosen and how church decisions are made are addressed at length within ecclesiology. Ecclesiology also talks about the role of church members. Since the Bible teaches the importance of every person in Christ and the priesthood of every believer, ecclesiology seeks to understand what the Bible teaches about the role of church members and membership. Some churches define church membership rules and responsibilities.

²⁵ Got Questions, "What Is Ecclesiology?" <https://www.gotquestions.org/ecclesiology.html>.

Others follow the model of the early churches with less formal requirements regarding involvement and commitment. Ecclesiology is essential for all Christians as it guides us toward a biblical understanding of how Christians relate to one another, to God, and to unbelievers. A firm understanding of ecclesiology benefits us personally as we learn how to help provide healthy church growth and honor God.²⁶

Pneumatology

Pneumatology refers to a particular discipline within Christian theology that focuses on the study of the Holy Spirit. Pneumatology is a reality and discussion of faith rooted in the unfolding drama of God's outreach to His creation. The word pneumatology is a combination of two words: *pneuma* (spirit) and ology (study of). It is difficult to speak of matters of faith and life in the kingdom of God without speaking of pneumatology. This section of this chapter will look at pneumatology's role in the life of the individual and the church. When the subject of leadership training and development is discussed in the life of the church, more is needed than a skill set and interest. This unit will look at the personality of the Holy Spirit, His Deity, the gifts of the Spirit, and how they relate to my topic.

The Personhood of the Holy Spirit

Without a doubt the Holy Spirit is the most misunderstood member of the Trinity. Often, such misunderstandings and false teachings will arise concerning Him. Who is the

²⁶ Got Questions, "What Is Ecclesiology?" <https://www.gotquestions.org/Ecclesiology.html>.

Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is not a force, energy, or power, as some have wrongly believed. He is a person! To encourage believers to pursue personal intimacy with the Holy Spirit, R. C. Sproul said,

Do you know who the Holy Spirit is? Do you understand the Holy Spirit in terms of a personal relationship? Or does the Spirit remain for you a vague, misty, abstract concept or an illusive, amorphous force? Forces in and of themselves are impersonal. But the Holy Spirit is not simply an abstract force. He is a person who empowers the people of God for the Christian life.²⁷

The Holy Spirit's personhood is especially important to note as the concept of pantheism is widespread. Pantheistic thought teaches that God is in everything. God is part of the trees, part of the earth, and part of every human being. To them god is an energy, not a personality. Though the Bible does teach that God is omnipresent – that He is everywhere– that does not mean He is everything. In fact, scripture clearly teaches against the worship of objects, which is often seen in pantheistic thought.

His Deity

The deity of the Holy Spirit and the doctrine of the Trinity are clearly bound together. It is obviously impossible to believe in the trinity of God if one denies the deity of the Spirit. To deny His deity is to deny the Trinity, and the denial of these will also inadvertently lead to the denial of other fundamentals such as the inspiration and inerrancy of scripture. The scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit is as divine as the Father and the Son. As the third Person in the Godhead, He is worthy of our praise and worship and of the glory that is the Father's and the Son's. His deity is relevant to our spiritual life and to His ability to carry out His ministry in our lives.

²⁷ R. C. Sproul, *Who Is the Holy Spirit?*, Vol. 13 (Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2012), 13.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. Wisdom, also known as *sofia*, helps us to distinguish the good from the evil and permits us to know and love God. It allows a person to understand things from God's point of view. A person with the gift of wisdom can use this truth to glorify God by choosing Godly solutions to problems. It is the desire to contemplate the things of God.²⁸

Understanding helps men to be less superficial and lets them get to things at a deeper level. It helps us to know ourselves and the other, to face the problems of our lives. Understanding is the gift of depth, of "to be" against "to appear." It allows us to grasp the very essence of the truths of the Catholic faith.

Counsel, also known as the gift of right judgment, helps men to know God's project of love He planned for men and indicates to us the right path to follow. It puts us in a condition to transmit our experiences of faith and to welcome others' advice about our daily choices. Through the gift of counsel, we are able to judge how best to act and we need not stand up for the truths of the faith, because the Holy Spirit will always guide us.

Fortitude is the gift of courage, constancy, and persistence. This important gift permits us to be humble and recognize our weaknesses, allowing us to ask for help from

²⁸ Jared Dees, "The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit," 2021, <https://www.catechist.com/seven-gifts-holy-spirit/>.

the Holy Spirit. With this gift, a person is no longer afraid to stand up for God and His truths.²⁹

Knowledge, in the Bible, means “to love.” Knowledge helps us to love and understand a person and God Himself. In the Bible, the word “knowledge” indicates the capacity of understanding the world and to recognize God as the Creator of it. This gift helps us to admire the greatness of God and to love every single creature of our planet. The gift of knowledge allows us to understand the meaning and purpose God has for us and to live up to this meaning.³⁰

Piety is deeply linked to the Latin term *pietas*, which represents the familiar love between sons and parents. It helps us believe that God is our Father who loves us, who gives us strength, peace, and joy. Piety is what allows men to completely embrace God and fully surrender to His will because, as a Father takes care of his children, He takes care of us with love and thoughtfulness. Fear of the Lord makes us conscious of His greatness and awesomeness. People with the gift of fear of the Lord understand that everything they are, in part, is due to the wonder, love, grace, and perfection of God. They are totally dependent on the Lord as a child is to a parent.

How These Gifts Relate to my Topic

As a pastor serving a multigenerational church and a church that has been plagued by transition in the areas of church leadership, it is so easy to feel unprepared and

²⁹ Jared Dees, “The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, 2021, <https://www.catechist.com/seven-gifts-holy-spirit/>.

³⁰ Bible.org, “Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit,” <https://bible.org/seriespage/4-pneumatology-holy-spirit>.

unqualified to lead my church to the next level. From handling pastoral care, sermon preparations, and spiritual attacks, there has never been a dull moment or a moment of rest. I can go to all of the leadership and pastoral conferences that are offered, watch, and listen to all of the pastoral podcasts on my phone, and read all the latest management books, but none of those things can replace what the Holy Spirit can do in you. It would be wise for a leader and congregation to be led by prayer and the Holy Spirit when it comes to dealing with the challenges of serving an unchanging God in an ever-changing world.

Conclusion

Out of all the theologies I lifted up in this paper regarding how theology plays a major role in succession and transition, practical theology is the point of reference and theological hat that I rest and hang on to as it relates to my project. When we examine succession paradigm between Moses and Joshua in Numbers 27:5-23, we see how the pastor's role in preparing leaders and those certain auxiliaries is key and significant in the success and effectiveness of transition and succession.

Pastoral transition is still one of the most challenging situations a ministry and church will face today and the years to come. Practical theology is the theological approach and foundation that I believe can help and assist a church when that time arises in the life of the church.

One of the top issues that many churches are facing or will face is effective transitioning of its leaders. Peter Drucker, a great management guru, said "the ingredient

most missing in churches today is a plan of succession.³¹ Ministers are getting older, and the church is not thinking about the next generation.” While some sects of Christianity have established a method of transitioning leaders from church to church, the church at large seems to be lacking an effective method of leadership transitioning within the church.

In the early days of the African American church, the pastor would remain at the same church until retirement or death, but studies have shown that is no longer the case for many of the clergy and pastors serving in most churches today. The reality of the matter is that transitions will occur and very seldom is the church or ministry left healthy as a result of those transitions. In the days and times we now live in, it is vital and imperative that the church considers how to effectively manage leadership transitions that prevent churches and ministries from operating in chaos and dysfunction. It has been proven time and time again that succession planning is one the best ways to manage leadership transitions. Succession planning is essential for the future of any entity.

All churches and their leaders will find themselves in some transition from time to time. Transition is difficult for everyone involved in it. However, it is also important to point out that transition does not discriminate, and it often comes without warning or a gentle head up. The aim of this project is to develop a rubric and guide for my ministry context so that when transition happens, whether it is the pastor or the usher’s ministry leader, the church can be prepared for moving forward with little to no setbacks because of the change.

³¹ Peter F. Drucker, *Management Challenges for the 21st Century* (New York, NY: Harper Business, 2001), 95.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The progress of my research has uncovered a problem. It is a common thread in my story and ministry context as outlined in chapter one. From my investigation, the following hypothesis has emerged: Macedonia needs a system for preparing current leaders on how to effectively pass the leadership baton. Suppose we as a church develop a rubric and guide for training and mentoring leaders for transition before death or a resignation occurs unexpectedly. In that case, it will eliminate any void in the church's leadership structure and allow a significant change in the future success and growth of the church.

My second chapter, the Biblical Foundations, dealt with the biblical text of the Moses-Joshua narrative of Numbers twenty-seven. This text gives and outlines a biblical model for training and leadership mentoring through transition among two leaders from two different generations.

In the third chapter, the Historical Foundations, I looked at the historical view of succession planning and the vital and pivotal role it can have on a church, business, or organization. One of the most disruptive things that can happen to a church, business, organization, or company is the sudden need to replace a leader. Succession planning affords your church, business, or organization the time and preparation necessary to

ensure a smooth leadership transition. This helps most churches and organizations survive unforeseen events within the ministry or organization.

The fourth chapter, the Theological Foundations, examined theological issues of leadership transition. The use of the discipline of ecclesiology and practical theology as ways to ensure a continuation in the church and those who will serve the church in the years to come was examined.

The historical challenges of Macedonia Church and the growth of a new generation of Macedonians present a perfect time to put into place this theological model and the mindset about passing the baton to the next leader while there is still time to provide insight and feedback to the incoming leader.

This chapter's primary goal is to provide an interdisciplinary model by investigating the different business and adaptive leadership theories that can help develop a model for Macedonia Church. To accomplish this, it is necessary to gather information from interdisciplinary models for comparison to assist in developing a model that will fit the ministry context of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

Adaptive Learning

In western culture, organizations are experiencing drastic changes. Many of those changes can be attributed to globalization and culture differences due to increased technological innovations. An examination of the 20th Century-style organizations revealed they were hierarchical and autocratic, which produced an organizational structure that mainly focused on internal consistency leading to flexibility in an ever-changing culture.

Jack Barenstsen, in his dissertation, titled “Church Leadership as Adaptive Identity Construction In A Changing Social Context,” states,

To remain vital, organizations need to enhance their ability to adapt and innovate by flattening their hierarchy, empowering people within peer-to-peer relationships, creating multidisciplinary teams that function across old departmental boundaries, and adopting a participative style of management.”¹

As culture changes, so must the style of leadership change. There has to be an abandonment of leadership structures where the leader appears as a solitary, active change agent at the hierarchy’s pinnacle. In the 21st century, leaders need to develop a relationship with followers. They lead their organizations to interact with their culture and be willing to increase their capacity to take on society’s issues, thus validating their leadership.² Jack Barensten gives insight when he shares, “recent shift in leadership perspective represent the broad and continuous development of leadership practice, many corporate and church leaders experience them as discontinuous and disruptive.”³

In the *Journal of Religious Leadership*, Thomas Tumblin reviews the work of Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky. He asserts in *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*, that, “adaptive leadership empowers people to address challenges and build capacity to thrive. It honors the past, encourages experimentation, depends on diversity, alters old

¹ Jack Barensten, “Church Leadership as Adaptive Identity Construction in a Changing Social Context,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2015):50, ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

² Jack Barensten, “Church Leadership as Adaptive Identity Construction in a Changing Social Context,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2015):50, ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

³ Jack Barensten, “Church Leadership as Adaptive Identity Construction in a Changing Social Context,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2015):50, ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

DA, and takes time. Adaptive leadership challenges required stakeholders to learn to define problems and explore solutions.”⁴

Thomas Gyuroka’s review of the same work points out these basic assumptions as it relates to adaptive leadership:

- Adaptive Leadership is about change that enables the capacity to thrive.
- Adaptive Leadership builds upon the past rather than just eradicating it.
- Organizational change happens through experimentation.
- Adaptive Leadership relies on diversity.
- New adaptations have the potential of significantly displacing, re-regulating, and rearranging old DNA.
- Adaptive Leadership takes time.
- Adaptive Leadership theory starts with the realization that there are really no dysfunctional organizations because all organizations function at the level of adaptation, they are willing to engage in.⁵

Historically, Macedonia Church as a whole congregation has not resisted the change in the hierarchy leadership structure, but the ministry leaders have slowed down the change agent in their ministry roles.⁶ Moses Naim argues that “power as we knew it has effectively disappeared. The diversity and complexity of peoples and products simply overwhelm an organization’s instruments of control. Social media and technology have

⁴ Thomas Tumblin, “The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2010): ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

⁵ Thomas Gyuroka, “The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 146, ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

⁶ Jack Barensten, “Church Leadership as Adaptive Identity Construction in a Changing Social Context,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2015):50, ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

made information widely available in such a way that younger generations typically question authority and challenge power more than previous generations.”⁷

The challenging question for Macedonia Church ministry leaders is: “are they willing to adapt to a new leadership structure?” So much of the ministry leadership have served in some form of leadership for over thirty years, and the actual implantation of a new model will perhaps be met with some resistance. E. A. John states, “the ability to introduce change with minimum resistance is a key managerial skill since change is a necessary way of life for all organizations. Even if a company intrinsically does not wish to change, it must eventually respond to movements in the societal and economic environment if it is to survive.”⁸

The autonomy of the African American Baptist church has created an environment that gives one the ideology to remain at the same church, holding the same position until retirement or death. This type of mentality and ideology has prevented many churches and ministries from growing and evolving to be the ministries that God designed them to be. I believe that this ideology, in conjunction with the pandemic of 2020, has begun to decrease in many churches and ministries. Many pastors and leaders do not commit to longevity, and the average pastoral tenure is five years or less. This action can cause churches to become dysfunctional and territorial because of a lack of time to allow time for mentoring for transition and succession planning. However, this is

⁷ Moses Naim, *The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States, Why Being in Charge Isn't What it Used to Be* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2013), 178-180.

⁸ E. A. Johns, *The Sociology of Organizational Change* (New York, NY: Pergamon Press, 1973), 6.

not an excuse to allow the tremendous work and contributions of those who labored before us to be wasted and not carried over into the church's future.

Adaptive Leadership Framework

Donald Bailey, in his article, "Studying the Clinical Encounter with the Adaptive Leadership Framework," posits "the concept of leadership as a personal capability, not contingent on one's position in a hierarchy."⁹

The Adaptive Leadership framework, based on the complexity science theory, provides a useful lens to explore practitioners' leadership behaviors at the point of care. Adaptive leadership is the work that practitioners do to mobilize and support patients to do adaptive work.¹⁰

The article continues with the following concepts for adaptive leadership:

The fundamental idea underlying the Adaptive Leadership framework can be explained by complexity science. Just as organizations are a complex adaptive system, so too are individuals. Individuals adapt both physically and psychologically as they interact with the environment. The Adaptive Leadership framework proposes that there are two broad categories of challenges that patients face: technical and adaptive challenges. Technical challenges are situations where both the problem and the potential solution can be clearly defined by an expert. Adaptive leadership is the work providers do to mobilize and support patients and their families in doing their adaptive work. The Adaptive Leadership framework provides a useful way to organize what occurs during patient-provider encounters, including the delivery of care on hospital inpatients units. Practitioners are trained to do (and typically do) technical work for patients; they may or may not have the knowledge to support the adaptive work that patients possess to tackle an adaptive challenge. Technical problems are those that can be solved through the knowledge and skills providers.¹¹

Ruxandra Georgescu, in the article "Theoretical Insights of Leadership Style," states:

⁹ Donald E. Bailey, Jr. et. al., "Studying the Clinical Encounter with the Adaptive Leadership Framework," *Journal of Healthcare Leadership* 4 (2012): 83, doi:10.2147/JHL.S32686.

¹⁰ Bailey Jr., "Studying the Clinical Encounter with the Adaptive Leadership Framework," 85.

¹¹ Bailey, Jr., "Studying the Clinical Encounter with the Adaptive Leadership Framework," 85.

The importance of the leadership role cannot be overemphasized because the leader's interactions strongly influence the motivation and behavior of employees, and ultimately, the entire climate of the organization. Modern leadership theory recognizes that no single leadership style works well in all situations. Although they have similar tasks and objectives, between leaders in different companies, and even from the same company, there are major differences in how they guide people to achieve their goals. Differences come from the personality traits, the professional experience, and the training of these people.¹²

In the article, Georgescu addresses leadership styles from seven different perspectives:

1. **Authoritarian Leadership:** Authoritarian leadership can be described as the use of work-centered behavior that is designed to ensure task accomplishment. This style is characterized using one-way communication. The information goes only from the manager to the subordinate.
2. **Paternalistic Leadership:** Paternalistic leadership is understood as a work-centered behavior coupled with a protective employee-centered concern. The paternalistic style is often characterized by 'work hard and the company will take care of you.'
3. **Participative Leadership:** Participative leadership style is a combination of a work-centered and people-centered approach and known as a democratic leadership where the subordinates are involved in the decision making and controlling processes of the company.
4. **Laissez-faire Leadership:** Laissez-faire leadership is based upon the philosophy 'let them do' and describes leaders who allow their people to work on their own. This type of leadership can also occur naturally when managers do not have control over their work and their people.
5. **Transformational Leadership:** Transformational leadership treats each co-worker as a 'whole' individual rather than as an employee and considers the individual's talents and levels of knowledge to decide what suits him best or her best. They are able to inspire and motivate their team members.
6. **Charismatic Leadership:** Charismatic leaders inspire and motivate employees through his or her charismatic traits and abilities. Charismatic leaders are essentially very skilled communicators — individuals who are both verbally eloquent, but also able to communicate to followers on a deep level.
7. **Transactional Leadership:** Transactional leadership is based upon the assumption that subordinates and systems work better under a clear chain of

¹² Ruxandra Georgescu, "Theoretical Insights of Leadership Style," *Scientific Bulletin – Economic Sciences* 17, no. 1 (2018): 39-51.

command. The implicit belief in the leader-follower relationship is that people are motivated by rewards and penalties.¹³

Even though Georgescu outlined some of the major leadership styles across the leadership spectrum, it is important to remember that most of these leadership styles are determined by the culture of the organizations. Georgescu asserts that regarding management styles, “which leadership style an operating manager applies depends on the country and the area a company is doing business. The culture background has a strong influence, but also the size of the company, the organizational structure, the age, and the experiences a leader has made play a huge role.”¹⁴

When assessing these leadership systems and systems that Georgescu highlights, I must keep in mind that adaptive leadership takes on the challenges that currently exist in the organization. When developing this project, I must remember the culture of Macedonia Church and her challenges will not just fit neatly into just one of these leadership styles. My job is not only to be a pastor but an adaptive leader who is working to not just treat the symptom, but to ultimately get to the root of the problem. When a patient is sick and is at the doctor to address the illness, the objective of the physician is to diagnose the issue and not simply treat the issue at that moment. Adaptive leaders look to do the uncomfortable tasks of identifying and diagnosing problem areas and concerns.

Georgescu concludes his research by stating:

Given the modern organizations are no longer built on many hierarchical levels and the amount of information to be managed is increasing, the role of the manager is more complex. It is no longer just a person who holds the absolute truth, making decisions to impose on others, but rather acting as a facilitator, as a

¹³ Georgescu, “Theoretical Insights of Leadership Style,” 39-51.

¹⁴ Georgescu, “Theoretical Insights of Leadership Style,” 39-51.

mediator who will offer the possibility of manifesting the personality, the knowledge of the employees, adopting on that basis the better course of action.¹⁵

Mary Uhl-Bien, Russ Marion, and Bill McKelvey share in the article “Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting Leadership from the Industrial Age to Knowledge Era,” that,

leadership models of the last century have been products of top-down, bureaucratic paradigms. These models are eminently effective for an economy premised on physical production but are not well-suited for a more knowledge-oriented economy. The article looks at leadership from three roles: adaptive leadership, administrative leadership, and enabling leadership that reflects a dynamic relationship between the bureaucratic, administrative functions of the organization and the emergent, informal dynamics of complex adaptive systems.¹⁶

The three roles are defined as such:

- Administrative leadership – is a top-down function based on authority and position; thus, it possesses the power to make decisions for the organization.
- Adaptive leadership – is an emergent, interactive dynamic that produces adaptive outcomes in a social system. It is a collaborative change movement that emerges nonlinearly from interactive changes, or, more specifically, from the spaces between agents.
- Enabling leadership – manages the entanglement between administrative and adaptive leadership; this includes (1) managing the organization conditions in which adaptive leadership exists, and (2) helping disseminate innovative products of adaptive leadership upward and through the formal managerial system.¹⁷

¹⁵ Georgescu, “Theoretical Insights of Leadership Style,” 39-51.

¹⁶ Mary Uhl-Bien Russ Marion and Bill Mckelvey, “Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting Leadership from the Industrial Age to the Knowledge Era,” *Leadership Quarterly* 18, no.4 (2007): 298-318.

¹⁷ Marion and Mckelvey, “Complexity Leadership Theory,” 298-318.

The article defines adaptive leadership as emergent change behaviors under conditions of interaction, interdependence, asymmetrical information complex network dynamics, and tension.¹⁸

In summary, they argue that while the Knowledge Era calls for a new leadership paradigm, much leadership theory still promotes an approach aimed at incentivizing workers to follow vision-led, top-down control by CEOs. Though this approach fits recent trends toward performance management and accountability, it can stifle a firm's innovation and fitness. The Complexity Leadership Theory offers a new way of perceiving leadership — a theoretical framework for approaching the study of leadership that moves beyond the managerial logic of the Industrial Age to meet the new leadership requirements of the Knowledge Era.

Transition

The second step in viewing this business and adaptive leadership theory is the transition of leaders. There is usually a prepared succession plan in business that is carried out when there is a need for a leadership change. The successor is generally announced several months in advance of a change in administration to prepare for both management and employees adjustment period. Unlike the church, most businesses do not wait until an individual retires before having their successor in place. Succession planning allows the company to continue planning.

Jim Henderson states,

French pioneer of management history Henri Fayol who was the first to recognize and document the universal organizational need for succession planning.

¹⁸ Marion and Mckelvey, "Complexity Leadership Theory," 298-318.

Succession planning should not be for corporate America or the business community alone. It is well advised that a plan is in place and implemented before a need for a successor arises. Often sudden departure of a leader can have a significant impact on the organization. Far too often, many leaders are guilty of postponing their transition, thinking they have plenty of time to get it done.¹⁹

However, when leaders must face the reality of a sudden move, they realize that their work may be wasted without a successor in place who had the privilege of working with them before the transition. William Bridges states in his book, *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Changes*,

Great Britain's former prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, came face to face with this reality when she was forced from office. When it became clear she must relinquish her office, she observed: 'But there was one more duty I had to perform and that was to ensure that John Major was my successor. I wanted – perhaps I needed – to believe that he was the man to secure and safeguard my legacy and to take our policies forward.'²⁰

This has become the thinking of many church leaders, and they want their legacy protected and preserved.

It is vital and important that a successor is chosen for an organization to have stability and prepare for future growth. The challenge is getting those to adapt to what is taking place to maintain the organization's continuity. William Bridges also states:

It isn't the change that does you in, it's the transitions. Change is not the same as transition. Change is situational: the new site, the new boss, the new team roles, the new policy. Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external; the transition is internal. Since change is external and transition is internal, one can conclude that change, which we fear most, does not destroy what we have built. The thought of transition is a longer process than change itself.²¹

¹⁹ Jim Henderson, "The Value of Succession Planning," *Leadership Advance Online* 7 (2007): www.regent.edu/acad/sls/publications/journals.

²⁰ William Bridges, *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Changes* (Reading, PA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1991), 42.

²¹ Bridges, *Managing Transitions*, 46.

Margaret Wheatly shares this thought,

Disturbances could create disequilibrium, but disequilibrium could lead to growth. If the system had the capacity to react, then change was not necessarily a fearsome opponent. To understand the world from this perspective, scientists had to give up their views on decay and dissipation. They had to transform their ideas about their role of disequilibrium. They had to develop a new relationship with the disorder.²²

What we have viewed as a disorder can shift to growth and change. Many models show that most difficulties related to change does not come from the outside but are mostly internal.

Donald Schon outlines this concept: But how is it possible deliberately, from within, to change the direction of an organization? The conventional wisdom provides two very clear, although contradictory, answers. The first depends on the assumption that people cannot change. Since people cannot change, an organization, left to its own resources, cannot change either. Change is possible only when agents of change are brought in from the outside. The second answer is mechanical. It assumes that lack of technique is all that stands between an organization and a greater capacity for innovation.²³

In the article, “CEO Succession, and the CEO’s Commitment to the Status Quo (CSQ),” Henning Behr and Kerstin Feher state, “CEO successions are often far-

²² Margaret J. Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organization from an Orderly Universe* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1992), 87-88.

²³ Donald A. Schon, *Technology and Change: The New Heraclitus* (New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 1967), 123.

milestones in firms' development and have been the focus of academic research for decades."²⁴

Hypothesis 1: Newly appointed CEOs reveal a lower CSQ than established CEOs. The tenure hypothesis argues that tenure has a positive monotonic relation with CSQ at all stages of a CEO's tenure.

1. Long-tenured CEOs often do not question established processes and structures (Staw 1981) but rather are convinced about their enduring correctness due to an inner conviction of the validity of their action and due to a nonobservance of alternatives.
2. Long-tenured CEOs often become rigid (Staw 1981) due to a certain kind of organizational 'blindness.' Consideration of alternatives and shifts to new directions are less likely with increasing tenure because CEOs' basis for decision-making is biased by their earlier experiences and decisions in the same position.

Hypothesis 2: Outside successors reveal lower levels of CSQ than inside successors. The degree of a new CEO's commitment to the firm's current strategy is influenced by the reasons for the CEO's appointment. Firms likely select candidates they believe are not committed to the existing strategy, providing the necessary mindset for the intended turnaround. New CEOs are often appointed with a mandate to take certain actions. Newly appointed leaders do not function totally independently of their sponsors and of how those around them expect them to function.

Hypothesis 3: Successors after a forced CEO turnover reveal lower CSQ than successors after a voluntary turnover.²⁵

Kevin Eikenberry and Guy Harris give a concluding thought about a transition in their book *From Bud to Boss*:

Moments of transition require us to wrestle with the frustrations of learning new ways of thinking and new skill sets. In the process of learning, we will, by definition, make mistakes. Mistakes, failures, and frustrations are a normal part of the learning process. None of us know how to do something we have never done

²⁴ Henning Behr and Kerstin Fehre, "CEO Succession and the CEO's Commitment to the Status Quo," *Business Research* 12 (2019): 355, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40685-018-0064-4>.

²⁵ Behr and Fehre, "CEO Succession and the CEO's Commitment to the Status Quo," 355.

before until we try to do it. And then we cannot learn how to do it well until we make a few mistakes.²⁶

Mentoring

F. John Reh, in his article “Mentoring and Coaching: Similar but Not the Same,” outlines some pivotal thoughts of consideration for the importance of mentoring in succession planning. He writes,

The third part of the research of this theory is centered on mentoring. Mentoring is a critical component in the business context, but mentoring is a missing component in the church.

The terms mentoring and coaching often get used interchangeably, which misleads the audience. While similar in their support of someone’s development, they involve very different disciplines in practice. Mentoring consists of a long-term relationship focused on supporting the growth and development of the mentee. The mentor becomes a source of wisdom, teaching, and support, but not someone who observes and advises on specific actions or behavioral changes in daily work. Coaching typically involves a relationship of finite duration, with a focus on strengthening or eliminating specific behaviors in the here and now. Coaches help professionals correct behaviors that detract from their performance or strengthen those that support stronger performance around a given set of activities. Both mentoring and coaching offer incredibly valuable developmental support. However, one offers high-level guidance for long-term development, while the other helps provide a more immediate improvement in targeted areas.²⁷

As I approach my project, it will be necessary and vital to make sure that those who participate in the study understand the difference between coaching and mentoring, especially when dealing with transition.

²⁶ Kevin Eikenberry and Guy Harris, *From Bud to Boss* (San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass, 2011), 29, Kindle.

²⁷ F. John Reh, “Understanding the Role of a Mentor,” <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/a-guide-to-understanding-the-role-of-a-mentor-2275318>.

In their book, *Leadership on The Line: Staying Alive Through The Dangers of Change*, Ronald Heifetz and Martin Linsky write, “To lead is to live dangerously because when leadership counts, when you lead people through difficult change, you challenge what people hold dear – their daily habits, tools, loyalty, and ways of thinking – with nothing more to offer perhaps than a possibility.”²⁸

Conclusion

As a pastor who was called to a new church in the midst of a global pandemic and having to not only navigate COVID-19 but also navigate a congregation and group of ministry leaders who had not properly planned for transition, I faced a huge undertaking. I truly believe this was the foundation for not only this project but also my synergy from previous ministry context. I truly believe that out of all the issues the church needs to deal with in the next ten years, succession will be the one near the top of the list.

As someone who navigated my own leadership and pastoral transitions, this issue is near and dear to my heart. I believe one of the mistakes many leaders make – and certainly I am guilty as well – is letting what started with you end with you. One of the other reasons I believe ministry leaders hang on too long is because their identity is wrapped up in what they do. When they take a panoramic view of the future, usually ministry leaders have been in ministry for decades. But transition and succession planning forces us as ministry leaders to discover an identity that is not wrapped up in your ministry title or not in what you do, but it is found in who you are in Christ.

²⁸ Ronald Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017), 4.

Succession planning is vital because it addresses the issues of who will be responsible for leading the respective ministry when it is time for the current leader to transition to either a new role or out of ministry all together.

Each of the foundations for this doctoral thesis – biblical, historical, and theological – introduces principles from adaptive leadership. My aim for my doctoral project is to introduce and present the benefits of adaptive leadership to the ministry leaders of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, so that they understand their role as ministry leaders is not only for today, but also to prepare the leaders of tomorrow. I believe that post pandemic, this role of adaptive leadership will be vital for the future growth of Macedonia Church down the road and for the years to come. Jack Barensten shares, “to remain vital, organizations need to enhance their ability to adapt and innovate by flattening their hierarchy, empowering people within peer-to-peer relationships creating multidisciplinary teams that function across old departmental boundaries and adopting a participative style of management.”²⁹

Adaptive leadership is a tool that would be necessary for the congregation in Macedonia Church. Covid-19 has put the spotlight on every church and ministry and has shown us that avoiding change is counterproductive for churches who intend to survive and thrive in the years to come. Macedonia Church, along with so many other churches, have struggled with not only low church attendance for in-person services, but also low participation from those ministry leaders who were active before the pandemic. Every week, ministry leaders are struggling with the harsh reality that the church as we know

²⁹ Jack Barensten, “Church Leadership as Adaptive Identity Construction,” ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials, EBSCO Host.

will never be the same. If we are being completely honest, the world has changed and will never go back to what we knew prior to the pandemic.

This is why adaptive leadership is so important moving forward as it relates to the continuation of the church and her leadership. We are seeing not only employment problems in the world, but we are also seeing vacancy issues in the church community as well. The word that has been the soundtrack of my ministry coming out of the pandemic is the word “pivot.” In business, pivoting is a term that describes the process of changing direction when the current strategy is not delivering the desired results. The continuation of the church is based on our ability to pivot but also to adapt to the ever-changing community, world, and issues seeping into the church. Adaptive leaders are calm in situations when others panic, and they are always critically thinking so that they can remain two steps ahead of the organization.

Leaders must be willing to change and adapt. It is not enough to have a plan; you also need the flexibility to adjust when needed. Adaptive leaders must be open-minded, embrace feedback, and take calculated risks. The aim and goal of this project is to develop a guide and model for onboarding new ministry leaders and preparing current ministry leaders for the season and time when they will have to pass the baton to the next leader at Macedonia Church.

This model will include a review, assessment, analysis of the current system, practices, and policies of Macedonia Church relative to leadership through questionnaires and direct study. The model will consider the vision and mission to determine if the current model and policies are effective and align with growth and stability. If this

assessment is determined to be out of alignment and not effective for future ministry growth, a new system and model may be implemented.

My plan for determining the effectiveness of the current system will be accomplishing using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLA) assessment tool to assess leaders and potential leaders to identify if the current context's leadership practices are effective and beneficial for the transition of leadership. Regardless of the outcome of the assessment, it will be good for the health of the church to develop an additional model for transition of leadership for those entering and exiting ministry leadership at Macedonia Church.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

As a pastor serving a multigenerational church and a church that has been plagued my transition in the areas of church leadership, it is so easy to feel unprepared and unqualified to lead my church to the next level. From handling pastoral care, sermon preparations, and spiritual attacks, there is never a dull moment or a moment of rest. The new challenge for today's churches will not be lack of preaching, worship, or limited buildings; it will be the lack of development for future leaders. The development of leaders for future ministry and equipping them to lead and mentor the next generation of leaders must be an absolute necessity for continued church success. My project focused on developing and training ministry leaders for transition and succession at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, to lead and mentor the next generation of leaders. All churches and their leaders will find themselves in some transition from time to time. Transition is difficult for everyone involved in it; however, it is also important to point out that transition does not discriminate, and it often comes without warning or a gentle head up.

The focus of my project is to develop a rubric and guide for my ministry context so that when transition happens, whether it is the pastor or the usher's ministry leader, the church can be prepared for moving forward with little to no setbacks because of the

change. In my own ministry journey, I have always somehow been overwhelmed with various and numerous transitions. It seems like every six to seven years of both my personal and ministerial journey, I was hit with some type of transition in my personal life and in my ministerial journey. These types of transitions every couple of years, without a warning, forced me to pivot and learn the importance of flexibility and creativity. The harsh but painful and sad reality is that there is no amount of leadership conferences, management books, pastoral podcasts, or even seminaries that can exempt you from having to deal with transitions. When examining the history and story of my present ministry context, Macedonia Baptist Church, and my personal journey, one common theme keeps weaving in and out of both settings: transition and planning. Transition is inevitable, so why not prepare for it. The problem that was identified in my context is there is need for preparing and developing leaders when it comes to leadership transition. There are very few things in life that happen without going through some type of transition and needing a plan after that transition occurs and takes place. This was the case when it came to transitions in Macedonia as well as other ministry settings that I have served in prior to Macedonia.

My hypothesis of this project is if key leaders of Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton in Dayton, Ohio, go through a six-week training on how to effectively transition from one leader to another, then those responsible for keeping things going will be better equipped to deal with leadership transition when it occurs again in the life of the church. Another problem and area I really sought to address is the perception and viewpoint on how those in church and leadership view leadership transitions and succession planning. With the expected outcome being to prepare and develop leaders for transition and

succession at Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, the areas considered for biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary foundations all pointed towards areas and times of leadership transition.

Although I referenced the Book of Nehemiah in the initial stages of this journey of leadership transition and succession, the scripture that spoke to me came from Numbers 27:15-23. This selected scripture presents to me a perfect example and rubric for successful leadership transition and succession. Numbers 27:15-23 reads,

Moses said to the Lord, 'May the Lord, the God who gives breath to all living things, appoint someone over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.' So, the Lord said to Moses, 'Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit of leadership, and lay your hand on him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him. He is to stand before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by inquiring of the Urim before the Lord. At his command he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in.' Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly. Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the Lord instructed through Moses.

In Numbers 27, we see the changing of the guard when we find Moses at a turning point in his life and ministry. For the past eighty years of Moses' life and ministry, he has shared in the joys and the sorrows of the people that God has called him to lead and shepherd, but now we see in this chapter that God was telling him it was time for a new journey. This entire chapter deals with the transition from Moses to Israel's new leader. God makes that clear in verses 12-14 to everybody by announcing that Moses is going to die, and there will be a new leader. When Moses is informed, he is going to die and not make it to the Promise Land, his only request from God is not for the present but for the future. Moses does not ask God for more years; he asks for a successor and

new leader for his flock. This text not only outlines the importance of preparing those whom you lead for the next season of leadership, this passage also speaks directly to the aim of my project of preparing congregations and leaders for what is next after your season of leadership is over.

The Historical Foundations chapter outlined for this thesis and project was on the subject of succession planning. Succession planning ensures that business continues to operate efficiently without the presence of people who were holding key positions as they must have retired, resigned, etc. Succession planning was introduced by Henri Fayol in 1918 who believed that if the succession plans were interrupted, the organization would not be ready for the necessary transition. As it relates to church and ministry, succession is about leadership reproduction. Succession planning focuses on leadership reproduction over leadership replacement and leads with a proactive posture, not a reactive one. Succession planning also provides continuity of leadership by cultivating leaders within the church or organization's leadership pipeline.

Succession is not only concerned with the top levels of leadership or the key leaders of the organization but is a long-term investment strategy in the organization's most valuable resource: its people. Every day, there are hundreds of hundreds of ministry leaders and pastors resigning from their roles and leadership positions with no systems or processes in place to keep the balls in motion. I believe that succession planning is one of the tools necessary and needed to ensure that the church, ministry, or organization does not stop when those in leadership move on or transition from the church.

In the Theological Foundations chapter for this thesis and project, I looked at the specific theological fields of practical theology, process theology, liberation theology,

ecclesiology, and systematic theology. These theological focuses address the subject matter and provide insight on how these disciplines can help facilitate change and support healthy transition in the context setting of Macedonia Baptist Church. Practical theology, as its name implies, is the study of theology in a way that is intended to make it useful or applicable. Process theology is a theological approach that understands ultimate reality in terms of a dynamic process of becoming and ongoing change. Liberation theology studies Christian theology that emphasizes liberation from social, political, and economic oppression as an anticipation of salvation. Systematic theology is an organized, comprehensive approach to defining Christian doctrine and beliefs. Ecclesiology is the study of the church and how the church must be a place that galvanizes and inspires, not ostracizes. Although I addressed several theological fields in my Theological Foundations chapter for my project, practical theology is one that stood out the most as it relates to preparing churches and leaders for transition.

For the Interdisciplinary Foundations, I have researched the model of adaptive leadership. Adaptive leadership prepares leaders for changing environments. The church culture post pandemic will need this model of leadership to not only survive but thrive in ministry. Church culture is now more than ever a changing environment and I believe adaptive leadership will be vital for the future growth of my context and the church in the years to come. Adaptive leaders are calm in situations when others panic, and they are always critically thinking so that they can remain two steps ahead of the organization. Leaders must be willing to change and adapt. It is not enough to have a plan; you also need the flexibility to adjust when needed. Adaptive leaders must be open-minded, embrace feedback, and take calculated risks. While all problems that could show up

cannot be predetermined, adaptive leadership better prepares the leader and individual with problem-solving skills and proper planning strategies to deal with the ebbs and flows of transition.

The four Foundations chapters were selected with the goal of developing and preparing leaders for leadership transition and succession. We know that transition in leadership is inevitable, and all leaders are “interims” leaders because life is filled with swift transition.

Methodology

My project’s aim and focus were to develop and prepare leaders for transition and succession at Macedonia Baptist Church, so it made the most sense to work with current ministry leaders at Macedonia. Because I wanted to get the most out of this project, I chose to conduct my project using a hybrid format offering both in-person sessions and the Zoom video conferencing platform. Prior to the project workshop, I met with my contextual associates as well as my professional associates to discuss different aspects of the project. During those meetings with both contextual and professional associates, research obtained from the biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary foundational chapters were discussed.

Preparation for the workshops and recruiting for participants were done through the associate meetings as well. It was determined from those sessions to establish a sense of intimacy among those participants to keep the participants to twelve people or less. Making observations from in-person Sunday services and weekly ministry meetings, a list of leaders was compiled. From this list letters were sent out to a group of leaders

inviting them to take part in this project. When selecting leaders, I chose to select leaders from the ages of seventeen to seventy-five to provide a multigenerational approach and a healthy intersection of leadership representation in age and gender.

To measure the participant's grasp of the information and to measure the effectiveness of the project, three measurables were used. The research methods implemented were pre- and post-survey questionnaires (see Appendix C and D), personal interviews (see Appendix E), and weekly journaling (see Appendix F). The methods were incorporated into the weekly sessions with the questionnaires included in the first and last sessions. Each week, the closing of the sessions included journal prompts for the participants to reflect and journal over the week. The interviews were conducted at the close of the project sessions.

The pre and post-survey questionnaires were utilized to measure any changes because of the teaching. With the pre-survey questionnaire coming before the exposure to the subject matter and content, it gave a baseline to where the leader's perspective was on transition and their need to prepare for it as the church continues to go through seasons of transition and change. Being able to collect this data would give insight when the post-survey questionnaire was completed into any change in attitude, perspective, or knowledge about transition and succession based on the sessions held.

I also wanted to allow the participants the comfort to express their thoughts without a feeling of exposure or embarrassment. The research method of journaling was utilized to accomplish this objective. The participants were able to go from the weekly journaling prompts and share not only from it but anything else that the session manifested in their emotions, thoughts, and feelings. With being a smaller group and

being both in-person and virtual format, there was still the potential for limited transparency in the sessions. The purpose of journaling was to have a source of information that was not impacted by those potential meeting restraints.

The last research method of the interviews gave the participants a chance to verbally express their responses and opinions on the subject matter of the overall project. For the individual interviews, I used my contextual associates to assist with the raising of some of the questions so that the participants could speak freely without worrying about my influence or presence concerning the subject matter. Concerning the keeping of responses anonymous and maintaining objectivity, I reiterated to the participants our Zoom discussions were being recorded; however, their responses would always remain anonymous, and that they could speak freely. The Zoom recordings were saved to an external hard drive for safe keeping. Each week, I collected all the surveys, reflection notes, and journal entries in-person for those who attended in-person and via email for those who could not meet at the church for the in-person sessions.

Each week we met for a seventy-five-minute session. The sessions began with a teaching session and was followed by engagement and interaction. For seven weeks, I met with the participants assisted by contextual associates to prepare and develop leaders for transition and succession at Macedonia Baptist Church.

Implementation

All screened participants were over eighteen years and had been a member of Macedonia Baptist Church for at least two years or more. There were eleven participants in total for the project. Two of my professional associates and three of my contextual

associates participated in the project. Participants' engagement varied per week as work, family, and ministry complications emerged. However, I recorded all sessions and was able to provide the recording to all participants so that their feedback could be shared with me.

All participants were given names from the Greek alphabet to keep their responses anonymous among other participants. Participant Alpha is currently a Co-Christian Education Ministry leader and serves in Youth and Children' ministry. Participant Beta is a Co-Christian Education Ministry leader. Participant Gamma is a new member and serves on the Kitchen Ministry. Participant Delta is a trustee and serves as a church staff administration. Participant Epsilon serves as a Deacon Emeritus and leads the Grief Ministry. Participant Zeta serves as the Congregational Care Ministry leader. Participant Eta serves as a Deacon and Ministry Leader of the church CDC. Participant Theta serves as the Women's Ministry Leader and sings in the music ministry. Participant Iota is an Associate Minister and serves as Men's Ministry Leader. Participant Kappa serves as a Trustee and assists with Senior's Ministry.

The seven sessions took on the format of a Bible Study. Each week, the content was different and not always a biblical text but more of an experience-based format. We opened each session with prayer, recap of last week's session, and then the structure and order for the subject matter for that session. After each session, I left space and room for reflections and questions to be raised. After that period, the journaling prompt for the week was shared and then we closed out the session with instructions for next week and prayer. This was the general format for each session. The original intention was to hold

every session in person and leave room for a hybrid option, but I ended up doing half in-person sessions and half Zoom sessions for the overall flexibility of the group.

Our initial meeting session took on the form of an introductory session because it was geared towards me explaining the structure of the project, collecting consent forms (see Appendix B), passing out journals, and conducting a pre-survey questionnaire. Although this session was introductory, it gave me an opportunity to share the ministry context convergence with my personal spiritual autobiography with the group. This really allowed me to lay the foundation for our time together over the next several weeks. In this initial session, the participants were also able to hear from one another about their ministry journey at Macedonia Baptist Church as well as why this subject and project was so vitally important moving forward as a church body. The importance and impact of this project was shared not only for me personally but also how it could potentially impact the church as well.

Session One

The first session of the project was entitled “Transition and Crisis Management – What is Leadership Transition?” It took place on February 20, 2024, at 6 pm in-person at Macedonia Baptist Church in the Eva Jenkins Conference Room. This session was conducted by me and all project participants were present in-person and via Zoom. Although by the first session, I had already received every participant’s consent form and pre-survey questionnaires, I still took a few minutes to introduce the project, go over the key items of confidentiality in each session, and inform all participants that all written

feedback would be anonymous since they were all given special names for each project and I was the only one aware of the special names.

From there, I began the session by asking two major questions: When you hear the word “transition” what comes to your mind initially? Many participants engaged in the discussion and stated that when they hear the word transition, they immediately become concerned because transition represents change. One of the participants jumped in the conversation and stated that change can be good if it is handled correctly. Change is the outward manifestation of decisions such as letting someone go. Transition is the shift in the psychological and culture of the organization — make sure you plan for both! Many people plan for change, but few plans for transition. This discussion led to the second question, what is Leadership Transition? A leadership transition is the passing of the torch from one leader to another leader.

One of the things I stated during this segment of session one was transition is inevitable. All churches and ministry leaders will find themselves in some type of transition from time to time, so why not prepare for it. I shared with the group of participants that every pastor, minister, or ministry leader is in their role for a season because no one and nothing is permanent under the sun. Change and transition are non-negotiable, constant realities of life and leadership. All leaders must understand and fully grasp that no matter your position, you are temporary. Once you recognize this, the next step is to start on a plan for your transition!

Furthermore, we engaged a few things churches and organizations should avoid when the church is going through leadership transitions and we looked at the Leadership Transition Model developed by William Bridges in 1979. Bridges developed a three-

stage model for Leadership Transition. Those stages are Accept the ending, Live in the Neutral Zone, and Reach Your New Beginning.¹ After our group question and answer session concluded, I provided some closing words and thoughts on the subject matter and provided the participants instructions for their journal entry. In session one, I posed the question: What has been your experiences with transitions?

Session Two

The second session of the project was entitled “Biblical Models of Leadership Transition in the Old and New Testament.” It took place on February 27, 2024, at 6 pm In Person at Macedonia Baptist Church in the Eva Jenkins Conference and via Zoom making the meeting format a hybrid meeting model. This session was conducted by me and all project participants were present in-person and via Zoom. This session resembled a traditional Bible study class as the content was based upon the Biblical Foundations for the project found in Numbers 27:15-23. For this session, we looked at and studied the subject matter of leadership transition between the passing of the baton from Moses to Joshua. In this particular context of Numbers 27, we see Moses’s humanity, inadequacy, and his heart for God’s people.

It is in this particular chapter of Numbers 27 that we see the changing of the guard when Moses finds himself at a turning point for his life and ministry. For the past eighty years of Moses’ life and ministry, he has shared in the joys and the sorrows of the people that God has called him to lead, but now we see in this season of his ministry that his leadership and pastoral tenure coming to an end. When Moses is informed that he is

¹ William Bridges, *Transitions: Making Sense of Life’s Changes* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2004), no specific page range used in referencing this book.

going to die and not make it to the Promise Land, his only request from God is for a successor and new leader for his flock.

Joshua is chosen by God to be Moses' successor and to serve as a co-ruler for a period of time before Joshua has the full responsibility of being the senior leader. Numbers 27:15-23 outlines the process of leadership transition and succession from Moses to Joshua and gives us a perfect picture of what healthy transition should look like in the life of the church. Because of the biblical nature of this class, there was a familiarity to the feeling of the session and it provided great feedback, insight, and engagement from all the participants in this session. Many of the participants shared and stated that the leadership transfer from Moses to Joshua provided a noteworthy guide on how to prepare for the next season and set up leaders to lead beyond the present leadership. Like the previous session, I then gave an overview of the different themes in these few verses and the urgency for pastors and ministry leaders to develop some type of process and system of leadership continuation for preparing future leaders for the season when the current leaders tenure is coming to an end. After our group question and answer session concluded, I provided some closing words and thoughts on the subject matter and provided the participants instructions for their journal entry. In session two, I posed the question: How do you understand Numbers 27:15-23 and how does it impact and affect expectations that members have of their ministry leaders?

Session Three

The third session of this project was entitled "Models of Leadership Transition and Succession Outside of the Church." It took place on March 5, 2024, at 6 pm in-

person at Macedonia Baptist Church in the Eva Jenkins Conference room and via Zoom making the meeting format a hybrid meeting model. This session was conducted by me and all project participants were present both in-person and via Zoom. The session opened with prayer followed by thanks to all the participants for the sacrificing of their time to participate in the project.

I then gave an overview of the progression of the sessions starting with the reiteration of the urgency of churches preparing and developing leaders for leadership transition and succession. In this third session of the project, I began the teaching by stating that leadership transition was not only biblical, but also logical and led the discussion on leadership transitions as a subject of theory and practice. During this session, we studied the Historical Foundations chapter component of my project dealing with the impact and story of Henry Fayol, known by many as the “father of succession planning.” Fayol believed that the strength of any organizations that do not have formal succession plans will ultimately lead to the organization not fulfilling its fullest potential.

Fayol developed fourteen principles related to leadership transition and succession planning.² This session focused on the reality that without a defined plan in place, a leader’s departure can create confusion and massive risk to an organization’s stability. This session ended up bringing to the forefront that succession planning affords the church, business, or organization the time and preparation necessary to ensure a smooth transition and a level of continuity for the business or organization. We then moved into the portion of looking at models outside of the church that have presented

² Henry Fayol, *Industrial and General Administration* (London, UK: Pitman & Sons, Ltd, 1930), no specific page range used in referencing this book.

good models for transition and succession planning such as companies like Apple, Johnson & Johnson, and even local funeral home businesses. The third session ended with many of the participants stating in their discussion and feedback with me that one of the most disruptive things that can happen to a church, business, organization, or company is the sudden need to replace a leader and having no plan in place to do it effectively. Like the previous session, I provided some closing words and thoughts on the subject matter and provided the participants instructions for their journal entry. In session three, I posed the question: How do you view and feel about models of leadership transition and succession outside of the church?

Session Four

The fourth session of this project was entitled “Listening to The Soul and Becoming An Emotional Healthy Leader.” It took place on March 12, 2024, at 6 pm and it was completely virtual due to a scheduling conflict for most of the participants. The session opened with prayer followed by thanks to all the participants for the sacrificing of their time to participate in the project. I then gave a recap and overview of the progression of the sessions starting with the reiteration of the urgency of churches preparing and developing leaders for leadership transition and succession.

In this fourth session of the project, I began the teaching by stating that change and transition are non-negotiable, constant realities of life, and as a result, pastor and ministry leaders can sometimes miss God’s revelation of His “good, pleasing, and perfect” will because of the refusal to adjust and adapt to new changes and what we call in the church “transition.” We then moved the attention and focus to Jean Stairs’ book

Listening For The Soul, which states “listening To The Soul” means being aware of and open to the Holy Spirit in the midst of transition and hearing what He is saying to not only the church as a whole but to those in ministry leadership.³ In this session, I shared with the participants that listening to the soul is simply the way we express our trust and belief in God’s plan despite the uncertainties of living in this world and not listening to the soul can result in becoming an “Emotionally Unhealthy Leader.” I then moved from Jean Stairs book to Peter Scazzero’s book: *The Emotionally Healthy Leader* and shared with the participants some of the characteristics of an emotional unhealthy leader. The participants were fully engaged with the content of this book and lifted up some concerns that they saw currently in many of the ministry leaders at Macedonia.

This discussion was so engaging and robust that we went over the allotted time for the weekly meeting time and I had to ring the participants back end by asking them to share their feedback and perspectives in their weekly journals. After some closing remarks on session four’s subject matter, I closed the session by passing out an Emotional Healthy Leader Assessment and posing the journal entry question for the week: How has transition within the church affected you emotionally as a member and leader? Have you ever felt that your spiritual life was affected positively or negatively during seasons of transitions?

³ Jean Stairs, *Listening for the Soul: Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Pres, 2000), no page range is reference in this citation.

Session Five

The fifth session of this project was entitled “Keeping The Main Thing –The Main Thing: What Ministries To Continue and Discontinue During Pastoral Transition.” It took place on March 19, 2024, at 6 pm and it was conducted by me and all project participants were present both in-person and via Zoom. The session opened with prayer, followed by thanks to all the participants for the sacrificing of their time to participate in the project. I then gave a recap of the progression of the sessions starting with the reiteration of the urgency of churches preparing and developing leaders for leadership transition and succession. In this fifth session of the project, I began the session by asking all the participants to list those ministries that must continue in the midst of pastoral and leadership transition. This request sparked so much feedback and engagement among most of the participants. After much back and forth between participants, there were five ministries that emerged as necessary ministries that must continue during pastoral and leadership transition. Those ministries were preaching, Christian education, music ministry, evangelism, as well as children and youth ministries. I closed and ended the session by posing the journal entry question for the week: What ministries have done well or suffered during previous pastoral and leadership transitions at Macedonia in the past?

Session Six

The six and final session of this project was entitled “Building for The Future – Designing A Transition Ministry Group (What To Do During Pastoral Transition & Before Pastoral Placement). It took place on March 26, 2024, at 6 pm and it was conducted by me and all project participants were present both in-person and via Zoom.

The session opened with prayer, followed by thanks to all the participants for the sacrificing of their time to participate in the project. I then gave a recap of the progression of the sessions starting with the reiteration of the urgency of churches preparing and developing leaders for leadership transition and succession. In this six and final session of the project, I opened by sharing with the group of participants that now more than ever in recent history, the church needs leaders who understand and have the skills to lead people through change and transition.

My aim for the final session was to bring to light that if we know transition is inevitable and bound to happen, then why not prepare for it. My first attempt to help combat all of the negative connotations was to form a Church Transition Team (CCT). The Church Transition Team is a small working group whose sole purpose is to provide strategy for assisting with transition at Macedonia. The aim of this group is not to function as a pastoral search committee, but rather to help the congregation through transition and during the “in-between time of having senior pastoral leadership and before securing senior pastoral leadership” by helping the congregation see that transition a constant reality and God’s way to get us to become the church and disciples He has called us to become. After some closing remarks on session six’s subject matter, I closed the session by posing the journal entry questions for the week: How would you build or design a model for leadership transition at Macedonia Baptist Church after participating in this doctoral project? How do you now feel about leadership transition and succession?

Summary of Learning

Having completed all of the research, lesson plans, and teaching the weekly sessions, the remaining question was, did anyone learn anything about leadership transition and succession over the past several weeks? Going over the research methods, I begin to see the impact of the session on the participants. From the pre- and post-survey questionnaires, journals, and personal interviews, I began to share and relay my findings from each project participant.

Pre and Post-Survey Questionnaire

The pre- and post-survey questionnaires consisted of eight questions for evaluations. The purpose of each question was to measure any change in the responses as a result of the sessions, the introduction to leadership transition and succession, and how can you prepare for it as a ministry leader. The questions asked are shared below, with insights from each project participant's responses. All participants were given names from the Greek alphabet to keep their responses anonymous among other participants.

How do you define leadership transition?

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying the changing of leadership from one person to another.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is the inevitable season when the baton is passed from one person to another person.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying moving from one leadership administration to another leadership administration.

Post- Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is when it is time to shift to a new level of leadership.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying being prepared for any kind of change.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying being flexible and adaptable to shifting to a new normal.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying effectively moving from the old to new person.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying adjusting to a change and shift in leadership effectively.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is a change or departure of one leader and the arrival of another leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying the same thing he stated in the pre-survey questionnaire.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is the process of moving from one chapter to another chapter.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying maintaining the health and vitality of the church until leadership is stabilized.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying a smooth way of moving from the old to the new.

Post- Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is any significant change in the church or organization without a warning or plan in place.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying moving from one style of leadership to another style of leadership.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is a gift from God to begin something new in the church.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is the transfer of leadership coordinated by the church from a departing leader to a new leader.

Post- Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying leadership transition is accepting that one chapter is closed and another chapter is about to begin.

Participant Kappa

Pre- Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying movement from existing leadership to a new leadership.

Post- Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying this is a season where there is a changing of not only leadership but culture and objectives.

How do you define adaptive leadership?

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as filling in the gaps.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as knowing when to pivot and shift.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as being a leader who can adjust.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as leadership knows how to manage to rise to the occasion.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as adjusting to the shift.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as being ready and flexible at all times to the changes of being in leadership.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as being able to adapt to any situation.

Post- Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as being able to adjust and shift to the ever-changing transitions that come with leading people.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as leadership that is not stuck in one place.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as the art of moving your church or organization through complex or dynamic changes.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as leadership that can transition successfully without warning.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as leadership that can go with the ebbs and flows of leadership changes.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as leadership that is not routine or programmed only one way.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as learning that something has changed and moving the organization to adapt so that it can perform to its best ability.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as not really certain how to define it at the time.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as being flexible and open to new people and ways of doing things at church or the organization.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as being able to move to something new without warning.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as moving from one stage of life in the organization to a new stage of life in the organization.

Participant Kappa

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as on the job style of leadership.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant defined adaptive leadership as the ability to be able to adjust to changes in the form of new people, systems, and concepts.

Do you identify as an adaptive leader? If not, what type of leader do you identify as and why?

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels that he/she is an adaptive leader.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels like an adaptive leader.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels like an adaptive leader.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels like an adaptive leader but also a transactional leader because of their personality.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying no to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels they are not an adaptive leader but a servant leader and does not do well with new changes.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels they are an adaptive leader and even more so after the project due to some of the lessons in week four and five.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still agreeing to being adaptive leader.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels like they are an adaptive leader for the most part.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to being an adaptive leader.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels like they are an adaptive leader after the project.

Participant Kappa

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying not really certain at the time

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying they now consider themselves an adaptive leader but not as extreme because changes are still rough in the initial stages for them.

What ministries have you served in at Macedonia Baptist Church?

These responses are addressed in the summary of the next question. What were your experiences during the transition periods between different pastoral and ministry leadership administrations?

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant serves on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in three leadership administrations and stated only two of them were smooth and had plans. The last one was not as smooth as the first one.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant now feels that although the last leadership administration was not a smooth one, God's perfect will was done as it relates to senior leadership.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in three leadership administrations and stated the first transition was difficult but each one got better over the years.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that there is not as much distrust in leadership as it has been over the years and after pastoral and leadership transitions.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has not been involved any pastoral and leadership transitions at Macedonia.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant does not want to go through a leadership or pastoral transition but feels that they are prepared if one occurs at Macedonia.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has only experienced two leadership transitions in Macedonia and felt like there was not a plan in place until after the transition occurred at Macedonia.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that if we implement plan from this project, Macedonia will be better prepared for the next leadership transition.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in three leadership administrations and stated that all transitions went smoothly because he was a deacon and was in the know of things taking place.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant now feels that the church has done better over the years with communication of new changes and transitions, but they need to do a better job of keeping the church in the know of things moving forward.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has only been involved in two leadership transitions in administrations at Macedonia.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that the church will never be ready emotionally for change or transition in leadership but they can be better prepared

organizationally and feels that this project has opened their eyes in some ways to prepare themselves as leaders.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in three leadership administrations and stated the church always responded with hurt and disappointment after each transition.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that moving forward with a clear and detailed plan for not just the leaders but the congregation will better prepare them for the next leadership transition.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in three leadership administrations and stated the church leaders in the past always kept things really quiet during leadership transitions, so participant really did not know what was going on during those times.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that the church needs to look at transition from a different perspective and that can only happen if it comes from the pastor.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in one pastoral leadership transition at Macedonia and feels that it was handled smoothly and well.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that if the leader is able to communicate the message and reason for the transition, the church as a whole would receive it better.

Participant Kappa

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant served on several ministries at Macedonia. Participant has been involved in only one pastoral transition at Macedonia and was on the search committee so participant did not feel out of the loop at all.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that communicating with the whole congregation weekly and consistently during transition could cut down on some of the confusion and gossip during pastoral transitions.

How do you do you feel about succession planning in the church?

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is definitely needed.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels it would be beneficial for Macedonia.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels it is needed to move the church forward.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed not only with the pastor but also with the ministry leaders.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels the whole church needs to go through trainings on succession planning.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is long overdue.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels it is necessary and vital for the future growth of Macedonia.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed but from a spiritual perspective.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels we need it at Macedonia but it needs to be from a biblical perspective so that members know it is not from the worldly set of lenses.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed and it is one of the reasons some leaders have been in their roles for over twenty years.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels it is long overdue and it is definitely time to put it into action now that we are on this topic.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed to cut down on all the anxiety and worry the church has when a leader passes or goes to another church.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels like we need to be talking about it more and more and not after a leader leaves.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed and was shocked to discover that there was not a plan in place when a leader leaves other than a pastoral search committee.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels it is necessary and wants to help with facilitating some of the sessions.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying they have no problem at all without it and they do it at the participant's job every couple of years.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels it necessary and needs to be discussed at the annual church meetings as a refresher.

Participant Kappa

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying it is needed and necessary even though it is the church, we need to remember the church is still a business.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying their thoughts are still the same and we need to put some policies and procedures in place as soon as possible.

Have you ever experienced regression as a direct result of the transitions between pastoral and ministry administrations?

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes they have with two of the three pastoral administrations.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels although there has been some regression over the years, the church has remained consistent and committed.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes there has been regression over the years.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant is encouraged by the direction the church is headed now spiritually and financially.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying no they have not experienced regression as of yet at Macedonia.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant is looking forward to doing their part to help the church stay relevant and up to date with the constant changes in the world and ministry.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes they have experienced regression and to the point that the participant stopped coming to church for a season.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant now knows that regression is going to happen at any church and that is not enough reason to stop coming or to stop being committed to the church and the role.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes there has been a slow regression over the years but not in the areas of Christian Education, only financially with poor financial management from past administrations.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant is encouraged by the direction of the church and excited to see what the future holds for Macedonia.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying they have not noticed any regression and only sees regression from a spiritual perspective which is why their answer is no.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant now realizes that there were some areas the church stalled or reverted back to during some of the transitions and leadership vacancies over the years at Macedonia.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to regressions over the years.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant does not feel the regressions have outweighed the church growth that has occurred over the years.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to the regressions over the years and between pastoral administrations.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant wants to see a plan put in place to keep the momentum going for the church even when there is a leadership transition.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying no on seeing the church regressing and attributes their answer to their short tenure at the church.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels the church is poised to continue to grow and increase her impact in the city and community surrounding Macedonia.

Participant Kappa

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to the regression but stated that all things regress from time to time.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that the church can handle regressions when the right and equipped leadership is in place.

Do you believe there was effective leadership during these transitions between different ministry administrations? If you believe there was, please give examples. If you believe not, please give examples of how leadership was lacking during these transitions

Participant Alpha

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes we had effective leadership through every pastoral and leadership administration transition.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant felt as if the leaders who led the church during the seasons of transitions were not really celebrated for their hard work during those seasons.

Participant Beta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes we had good and strong leadership whenever there was an absence of a pastor.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that once a new leader was selected and in place, some of those who stepped up during transition reverted back to their old ways of letting the leader do everything.

Participant Gamma

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying that she was not a part of any leadership transition due to their short tenure at Macedonia.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that the church has strong leadership in the event a leadership transition occurs at Macedonia.

Participant Delta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to having effective leadership. The deacons and trustees really stepped up to lead the church.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant still feels that if a pastoral transition occurred, the leadership would rise to the occasion collectively.

Participant Epsilon

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to having effective leaders in place during leadership transitions.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels although some of the leaders who led the church are now deceased, the church is still a strong church in the leadership department.

Participant Zeta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to having effective leaders during transitions.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that although they were not in leadership during those times of transition, the participant would volunteer themselves to step up to assist and help the church in the event of a leadership transition.

Participant Eta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes; the church was blessed to have some strong and committed leaders through every pastoral transition.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that Macedonia has been extremely blessed to have some new leaders who would step up today if there was a pastoral transition.

Participant Theta

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to Macedonia having effective leadership through every pastoral administration.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels more qualified and capable to help and assist if there was another pastoral transition at Macedonia.

Participant Iota

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to having effective leadership.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that he/she can offer effective leadership and would be helpful in the next pastoral transition.

Participant Kappa

Pre-Survey Questionnaire: Participant responded by saying yes to having effective leadership and stated that they were a part of the pastoral search committee in the last transition.

Post-Survey Questionnaire: Participant feels that the church as a whole would respond well if there was a pastoral transition due to the strong leadership of the deacons and trustees.

Journaling

Each of the weekly sessions closed with a journaling prompt for all of the participants. These prompts were given the instruction to let this be a starting point for their reflections each week. The prompts correlated with the topic for that week. They were able to journal any time before the next session. At the end of the project, the journals were all retrieved. Upon receiving the journals, it was apparent that for the most part, the participants understood the weekly subject matter. Below are combined summaries from the participants' journal for prompt.

Journal Prompt – Session One Analysis

This first journey entry question dealt with the participants' experiences with leadership transitions. In this session, I asked two major questions: When you hear the word "transition," what comes to your mind initially? Many participants engaged in the discussion and stated that when they hear the word transition, they immediately become concerned because transition represents change. Many participants had more transitions outside of their church experiences and in the working field. Many of their experiences were not positive and leaned toward being negative and bitter, especially when it came to relating to the pastoral leadership transitions.

Journal Prompt – Session Two Analysis

The second journal entry assigned was based on Numbers 27:15-23. Participants were able to connect the scripture with the topic and overall took time to reflect and study the passage as it relates to leadership transition and the succession journey from Moses to

Joshua. Participant Alpha stated Moses is asking God to appoint someone to take the Israelites to the Promised Land, since Moses will not see the Promised Land because he will die due to his disobedience. Moses is to pass some of his responsibilities to Joshua. Many of the participants such as Gamma stated the expectations members have on the pastors is rather unfair as it relates to tenure and season. There was lots of conflicting opinions from several participants who felt that the pastor's role is not only to teach and preach but also to prepare the next leader when they step down from the role. The responses from this session were more engaging and reflective than I initially thought they would be in the beginning of the session as we dived into the study.

Journal Prompt – Week Three Analysis

In this third session, the journal entry was centered around models of leadership transition and succession models outside of the church. The main objective was to expose the group participants to models where leadership transition and succession models have worked outside the four walls of the church. This session led to many participants sharing examples of succession plans outside church. Participant Iota who spent the majority of their work life in corporate America shared how transition and succession models in the secular field require prior planning. This session brought awareness of thought to most of the participants so that you do not have to reinvent the wheels when it comes to transition and leadership methods.

Journal Prompt – Week Four Analysis

In this fourth session, the journal entry was centered around “Being an Emotionally Healthy Leader.” The question posed that week was: what first comes to mind when you think of an emotionally unhealthy leader? This journal question led to a very robust conversation and discussion because everyone had a different definition of what emotionally healthy looks like as it relates to leadership. Participant Zeta stated, an emotionally unhealthy leader is “someone who does not have a good grasp on managing church, work, family as it relates to balance.” Participant Kappa stated that an emotional unhealthy leader is “someone that has a quick temper, unstable, and causes problems for their team and others.” This session concluded with each participant taking an Emotional Healthy Leader Assessment where many of the participants were eager to take and see where they fell on the scale of spectrum as it relates to their emotional health as a leader.

Journal Prompt – Week Five Analysis

In this fifth session, the journal entry involved having the participants to list those ministries that must continue in the midst of pastoral and leadership transition. The responses were varied but most of them overlapped each other. Because this project participant is a part of several key ministries in the church, I was not surprised by most of the responses. Many of the participants felt that Sunday school, Bible study, Children’s Church and Youth Ministries were the ministries that Macedonia should never stop or put on pause even during a leadership transition. However, there was some pushback from participants Delta and Eta who felt the emphasis should be on stewardship, seniors, and social media so that the church remains relevant and financially afloat during a pastoral

leadership transition. After much back and forth between participants, the overwhelming consensus was that life, church, and ministry do not stop or even pause when a leader transitions from their role. Participant Epsilon added that prayer ministry should be included and all of the participants agreed because prayer is the central focus of each ministry focus at Macedonia. This prompt brought out some good and thorough entries from all of the participants, even the ones who were not as vocal in other sessions.

Journal Prompt – Week Six Analysis

In this six session, the journal entry involved having the participants share how they would build or design a model for leadership transition at Macedonia. The object of this session was to bring to light that if we know transition is inevitable and bound to happen, then why not prepare for it. Many of the participants' responses resembled that their transition model would be similar to that of a pastoral search committee. In summary, from the journals, there was a significant amount of attention and evidence of the participants' reflection on a weekly basis. Their entries showed that the participants took the subject matter and applied it to their individual ministry focuses. Many of the participants shared that the subject matter could be beneficial even in their secular working environments.

Interviews

For the final session, individual interviews were coordinated by one of the contextual associates. The list of questions from the interviews are located in Appendix E. These interviews were recorded, and each participant gave permission to make those

recordings accessible. The responses shed light on how they felt about leadership transition and succession as a result of participating in this project. The participants shared and relayed with excitement and anticipation on this document being used as a guide to better prepare the church and leadership at Macedonia going forward. Below are some quotes from the participants' interviews.

Participant Alpha

“I definitely have a better understanding of transitions in the church (ministry or pastoral). I can really appreciate the work behind a transition. I do feel that Macedonia has handled transition well when it came to pastoral transitions. I have been through two pastoral transitions. I believe the transitions were smooth. If there is one complaint, it is better communication on relaying information to the members. I feel that if asked to be on a transition team that I could and would do it. After participating in this, I think that a transition team is pivotal to all churches.”

Participant Beta

“After participating in this project, I now know leadership transition is to be expected due to being transfer to another assignment, retirement, death or sickness. I feel my role and responsibility as a member and ministry leader is to be a blessing to outgoing and incoming leadership. After participating in this project, I also need to prepare for my own transition with my family and job. This project has taught me that it is necessary and important to take the time to grieve between leadership transitions.”

Participant Gamma

“This project has taught me to not run from transition, but rather to embrace it as a part of life. Pastor Ellis has shown me the importance of not waiting until transitions happens to prepare, but rather to be proactive and not reactive. Every church, especially the black church, needs to put together some type of transition model for when their pastor is no longer in place.”

Participant Delta

“I feel the same as I did from the beginning of the case study and that is change and transition is part of life. I believe Macedonia has handled change very well over the years because the foundation of the church is to join the church and not the pastor. Leadership transitions and changes are inevitable, but the supporting cast normally stays the same and that has been true for Macedonia. I feel my role as a member is to help support and guide the church in whatever transitions the church might face in the years to come.”

Participant Epsilon

“The realization is that leadership transition is inevitable! Before this case study, I brought firsthand experience regarding two pastoral transitions at Macedonia Baptist Church. During the first transition (The Late Rev. Marcus T. Clark to Rev. Robert E. Baines, Jr.), there was ‘no’ written plan, yet we (Macedonia Baptist Church), made the transition by following the current leadership (The Late Deacon Chairperson/Moderator Virgil Smith) with prayer ‘first’ as the focus of this process. Even during the second

transition (Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr. to Rev. Jamison Hunter), with a written plan in place, the church remained strong with Deacon Edward E. Love serving as church moderator for approximately six months until Rev. Hunter accepted the call to become the pastor of Macedonia Baptist church. Finally, in the third pastoral transition, for whatever reason, the previously written transition plan was not utilized, and even through a worldwide pandemic, the church remained functional, although it was most difficult on the succeeding pastor, Rev. Jarvis A. Ellis, Sr. With the above as a backdrop, the need for pastoral and leadership transition planning is paramount. This case study has highlighted the need to have a comprehensive Leadership Transition and Succession Plan as a permanent document for the church records. I will go so far as to suggest that this document become a part of the church's Constitution. The church's Constitution is a document of mutually agreed-upon principles that govern the affairs and actions of the church. This Leadership and Succession Plan, once agreed upon, should be voted on by the membership and then added to the Constitution as an addendum."

Participant Zeta

"Participating in this project has confirmed that the church as a whole does not do transition and succession well and that needs to change. These last several weeks has forced me to look at failed and missed opportunities in the previous pastoral transitions where I could have been a better help to my church. Although I pray that the pastor does not leave us, I feel confident that we are better prepared if God calls him to another assignment."

Participant Eta

“Transition can be done efficiently with minimal chaos attached to it when there is a PLAN in place. This is not to say that there will be no emotions such as anger, hurt, or disappointment involved, but it does mean that there is a direction in which the church is going and that they will not just be ‘grabbing at the wind’ and directionless. My role will be to help facilitate the transition process alongside the transition team to make sure that the members are well-informed and that the day-to-day operations in ministry continue with a sense of normalcy as much as possible. My role will be to jump in and assist in areas that may not be adjusting to this change. (There are some people who will leave the church and their leadership roles in times of uncertainty) The ultimate goal is to continue to do Kingdom work in excellence despite the many challenges that ministry can experience, because God’s Word goes on.”

Participant Theta

“I have really enjoyed being in this case study and initially did not see myself as a help to this project, but I now see that every member of Macedonia has something to contribute when it comes to transitions. My prayer is that this case study be shared with the whole congregation in some form or way because transition affects the whole church, and not just leaders. I have changed my thinking and mindset as it relates to pastoral change and transition because I used to think of it as a negative thing.”

Participant Iota

“Although I haven’t been in a lot of pastoral transitions, I feel equipped and qualified to navigate one as a result of being in this group. The part of the project about the emotional health of a leader was my favorite session because it helped me see the emotional and psychological effect transition has had on me as a leader.”

Participant Kappa

“This whole case study and project has been an awakening for me as a leader and person in general because it helped me to see areas of my life where I need to improve in. Pastor really challenged me to think outside of the box when it comes to developing and preparing leaders for the future of Macedonia. Transition is not the end of the road; it is a bend in the road to something new and something fresh.”

In summary, the responses to the interview questions mirrored themes found in the questionnaires and surveys. Being able to see the responses given as opposed to reading them gave me a different perspective on what was read before. Participants were nervous and anxious at the beginning of this project, and all had a sense that I was preparing them for my exit and pastoral transition. Now it appears to be evident and clear that the main objective was to show them the urgency of preparing for leadership transition and succession which is inevitable at any church, not just Macedonia. Many of the participants showed that my attention and focus on pastoral transition was not a warning shot, but rather a labor of love to prepare them for the future of Macedonia. If I can be completely transparent and honest, this case study was an awakening and developmental experience for me as well.

Conclusion

To truly obtain insight and gauge the effectiveness of this project and case study, all the research methods used for this qualitative research project must be considered and examined. The application of the pre and post-surveys questionnaires, journaling prompts, and interviews provided triangulation to measure the data. When reviewing these three metrics, there were parallels discovered regarding the acceptance of pastoral transition and succession planning and the role adaptive leadership plays in the entire process.

Analyzing the research tools revealed an increased knowledge of the role of a leader. In each data set, participants recorded a new perspective of their position as a ministry leader and their role and responsibility to aid and support the church amid pastoral transition and succession for the future growth and continuation of Macedonia. The post-surveys questionnaires revealed lengthier definitions of leadership transition; the journal reflections detailed revelations of leadership transitions breakdowns; and the interviews included statements on a new understanding of leadership transitions and its role in every facet of the church life.

Each research method also revealed the embracing of the topic and the subject matter of preparing and developing leaders for transition and succession. In the journal prompts, participants wrote about the impact of the change and the development in their life and individual ministries because they participated in this project.

In the interview responses, each participant demonstrated and showed an acceptance of the charge of developing future leaders by being intentional with training and exposure to leadership transition training. The tests indicated that participants

acknowledged how past periods of transition impacted them as leaders and the church. That conclusion is paramount and vital to the embrace of a new model and guide.

Each research instrument revealed a desire and excitement to continue preparing and developing leaders by implementing transition and succession in their leadership training for their respective ministries. The project participants in this project all expressed the necessity and value of these sessions for not only Macedonia but for other churches as well. This was crystal clear in the interviews with that direct and specific question. This excitement was also evident in later journal entries as well as remarks made in the closing sessions prior to the post-survey questionnaire.

The journaling gave witness in reflecting on how the lack of training and development for the ministry leaders and church has impacted the church negatively. The post-survey questionnaire's responses included participants expressing a desire to grow in this leadership transition model.

My overall analysis of this project would be that it was successful. The purpose was to develop and prepare leaders for transition and succession. My belief was that the first objective of that was to make them aware of what it means. It turned out that my first objective was to help them view leadership transition and succession in the church from a positive perspective and vantage point. The data from the pre- and post-survey questionnaires signaled an understanding of the value of preparing and developing leaders for transition and succession at Macedonia Baptist Church in Dayton. The change in responses of participants from "little to no answers" to "full paragraphs" on the subject matter of transition and leadership was profound. This not only occurred in the testing but also in the weekly journal prompts.

The interviews are a component that will be done differently next time as they will be conducted before the end of the overall experience. That will ensure that I capture and collect all the data as we journey through each teaching session. I believe that some of the responses shared in the interviews could have been implemented in the weekly sessions to serve as a well-rounded project. I would have also done more sessions on grief and coping for ministry leaders as the data revealed there were leaders who were still hurt and wounded from previous leadership transitions. If I had a chance to do this project over, I would have included a representative or group that focused on social media and technology as it relates to the church transition team. I believe that by not including this group of ministry leaders, I missed a great opportunity to capture an ever-changing population of those who will never enter a physical church building.

This project not only challenged me but also transformed me to look at the areas of my life where transitions happened and occurred without warning in seasons of development and growth. This project has been a labor of love and pain at times, but it has taught me so much about myself and ministry as a pastor. Going forward, I plan on continuing to craft this work with the goal of consulting other churches and publishing materials to help other leaders and churches who are trying to navigate through pastoral and leadership transitions effectively. If the pandemic has taught the church anything, it is the lesson that nothing is forever and permanent. The biggest roadblock for the church today, tomorrow, and beyond is not a lack of preaching, lack of worship services, administration skills or buildings; rather, it is the refusal to prepare and develop leaders for transitions. If we know transition is inevitable, why not prepare for it.

APPENDIX A
EVENT FLYER



JARVIS A. ELLIS, SR. PRESENTS

DOCTORIAL PROJECT

Sessions

Title: Preparing & Developing Effective Leaders for Transition & Succession at Macedonia Baptist Church

Meeting Location and Format: All In-Person Sessions will be held at Macedonia Baptist Church (Eva Jenkins Conference Room - 27 North Gettysburg Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45417

ZOOM MEETING ID : 862 0995 4225

Passcode: Project

When: February 13th - April 2, 2024 FROM 6:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.

For More Information contact Jarvis Ellis at (937) 759-6145 or
via email at jaellis1@united.edu

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Investigator Name: Jarvis Armard Ellis

Contact Information: Email: jaellis1@united.edu Phone: 937-759-6145

I am a doctoral student at United Theological Seminary and am conducting a study on developing methods and models that will assist pastors, churches, and ministry leaders on how to prepare for leadership transition and conduct succession planning well. The overall benefits to subjects are intangible, religious, and spiritual in nature.

Procedures: If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to attend six, one-hour weekly small group sessions over the course of six weeks, engage dialogue and deliberation, and journal your thoughts and insight pertaining to the information provided.

Risks: There are inherent spiritual and emotional risks associated with any activity related to matters of faith and religious practices. Immediate risks may include, but are not limited to, feelings of guilt or shame over actions or attitudes, recovery of previously unidentified or uncovered experiences of trauma, a sense of obligation to participate in discussion, emotional stress from inability to complete all assignments associated with the curriculum, or financial responsibility for mental health treatment related to these risks. Long-term risks are less clear but may include lingering feelings of shame or confusion regarding teaching that leads to questioning the validity of the participant's faith. Individuals who experience duress due to participation in the study are encouraged to seek counseling from a licensed mental health professional. A professional can be recommended at your request.

Benefits: The aim of this study is to develop a rubric and guide for ministry leaders so that when the transition happens, whether it's the pastor or the usher's ministry leader, the church can be prepared to move forward with little to no setbacks because of the change. The religious benefits of such development and/or growth are intangible but potentially transformative. No other compensation or special consideration will be provided to participants of the study.

Voluntariness: Participation is voluntary and you may skip any survey questions you do not wish to answer or remain silent during small group conversations. You can also stop participating at any time. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your membership or affiliation with Macedonia Baptist Church or your local church affiliation. If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in the study, please contact me directly in person, on the phone, or via electronic communication. My contact information is at the top of this consent form. You can refuse to respond to any or all the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time without repercussion.

Confidentiality: I will be careful to keep your information confidential and will ask you (and all study group members) to keep our discussions confidential as well. There will be times when conversations are recorded and transcribed. You will be made aware of this prior to recording and are not required to participate in those conversations unless you

feel comfortable doing so. There is always a small risk of unwanted or accidental disclosure. Any notes, recordings, or transcriptions will be kept private. I will be the only one with access to your information. The files will be encrypted and password-protected. Your name will not be used in the raw data set or final research document.

Summary: This information is being provided so you are aware of the purpose, procedure, risks, and benefits of the study. Should you wish to participate you can sign this form and return it to me at least 24 hours before our first group meeting. Please contact me if you have any questions about the research study.

Signature: Signing this paper means that you have read the information fully or had it read to you and that you want to be in the study. ***If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper.*** Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or if you later decide to withdraw from the group. You agree that you have been told about this study, why it is being done, and what will be expected of you.

Name: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

PRE-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Pre-Survey Questionnaire

- (1) How do you define leadership transition?
- (2) How do you define adaptive leadership?
- (3) Do you identify as an adaptive leader? If not, what type of leader do you identify as and why?
- (4) What ministries have you served in at Macedonia Baptist Church?
- (5) What were your experiences during the transition periods between different pastoral and ministry leadership administrations?
- (6) How do you do you feel about succession planning in the church?
- (7) Have you ever experienced regression as a direct result of the transitions between pastoral and ministry administrations?
- (8) Do you believe that there was effective leadership during these transitions between different ministry administrations? If you believe there was, please give examples of such effective leadership. If you do not believe there was, please give examples of how leadership was lacking during these transitions

APPENDIX D
POST-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Post-Survey Questionnaire

- (1) After participating in this training, how do you define leadership transition?
- (2) After participating in this training, how do you define adaptive leadership?
- (3) After participating in this training, do you identify as an adaptive leader? If not, what type of leader do you identify as and why?
- (4) After participating in this training, what ministries have you served in at Macedonia Baptist Church?
- (5) What were your experiences during the transition periods between different pastoral and ministry leadership administrations?
- (6) After participating in this training, how do you feel about succession planning in the church?
- (7) Have you ever experienced regression as a direct result of the transitions between pastoral and ministry administrations?
- (8) Do you believe that there was effective leadership during these transitions between different ministry administrations? If you believe there was, please give examples of such effective leadership. If you do not believe there was, please give examples of how leadership was lacking during these transitions.

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

- (1) What age range do you fall into?
- (2) How many ministry leaders have you served under during your time at Macedonia Baptist Church?
- (3) Can you describe the previous pastoral administration's leadership style including their strengths and weaknesses and what they brought to the role and ministry?
- (4) Did previous church leadership conduct ministry leadership training sessions with ministry leaders?
- (5) If they did conduct leadership training sessions, did these sessions include instruction on transition and succession?
- (6) Do you believe that Macedonia as a whole has suffered as a direct result of the leadership transitions?
- (7) Do you feel that you have been properly prepared to handle and navigate through the leadership transition? If so, how have the ministries suffered?
- (8) What steps have you taken to address what you have experienced as a direct result of the ministry leadership transition?
- (9) What are your expectations moving forward regarding Macedonia's leadership development and transition process?

APPENDIX F

JOURNALING QUESTIONS PROMPTS

Journaling Question Prompts – February 13th – April 2nd

- (1) What has been your experiences with transitions? (Week 1) (February 20th)
- (2) How do you understand Numbers 27:15-23 and how it impacts and affects expectations that members have of their ministry leaders? (Week 2) (February 27th)
- (3) How do you view models of leadership transition outside of the church? In what ways can you apply how persons in the field of succession planning address/deal with transitions that arise in leadership to the transitions in the ministry leadership at Macedonia Baptist Church? Are there any past or present-day models you have seen work well? (Week 3) (March 5th)
- (4) How has transition within the church affected you emotionally as a member and leader? Have you felt that your spiritual life was affected positively or negatively during seasons of transitions? (Week 4) (March 12th)
- (5) How would build or design a model for leadership transition at Macedonia Baptist Church knowing the strengths and overall impact of succession planning? (Week 5) March 19th)
- (6) How are the things, activities, and ministries that you feel must continue or discontinue during the season of leadership transition at Macedonia? (Week 6) (March 27th)
- (7) How do you know/view leadership transition and succession in the life of Macedonia? Do you feel transition is a good or bad thing? Why? (Week 7) (April 2nd)

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